Commentary

Volume Fifty, Number Four, October 1970

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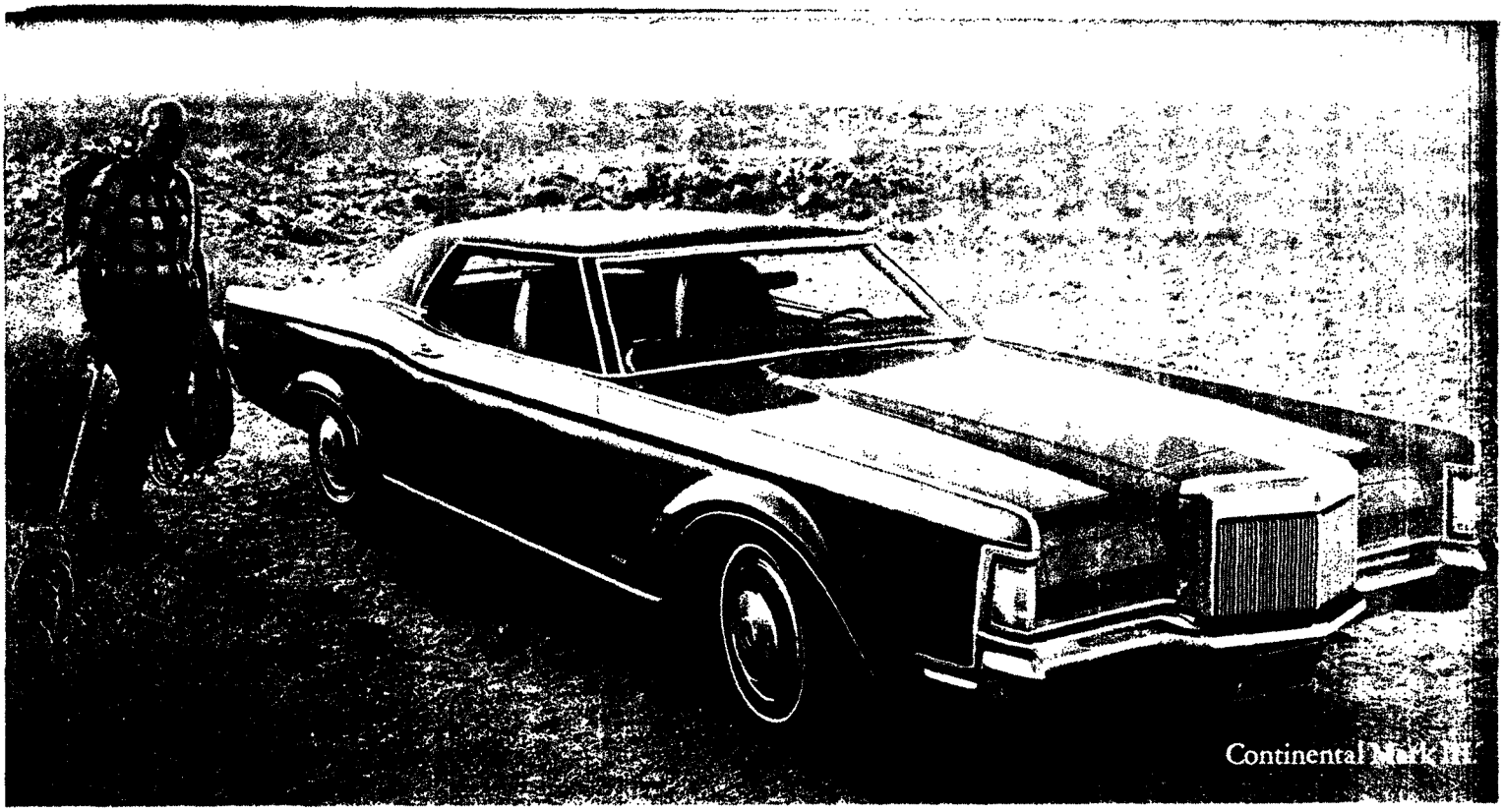

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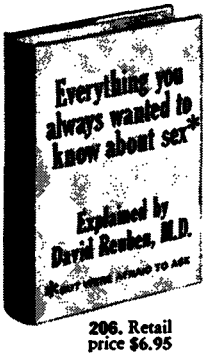

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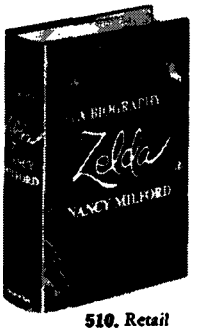

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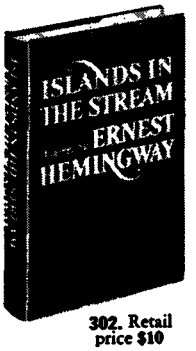

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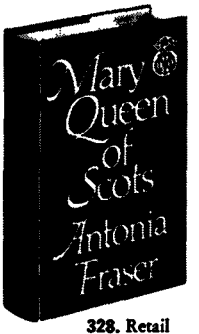

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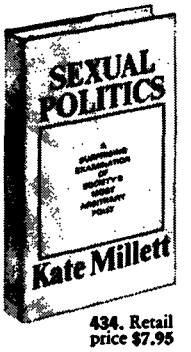

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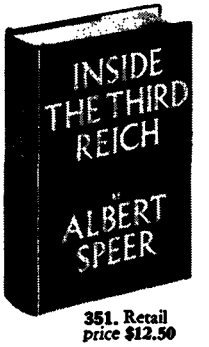

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Letters from Readers

The Middle East and the Intellectuals

To the Editor of Commentary:

Carl Gershman's article, "'Matzpen' and Its Sponsors" [August], is a truly exceptional piece. As a Matzpen activist in Israel, where the Zionist establishment has cultivated the arts of character assassination, innuendo, and misrepresentation of opponents' ideas to a point surpassing that achieved by your Senator Joe McCarthy in the early 1950's, I am used to seeing my words and the words of my comrades systematically misreported, misinterpreted, and even freely created by would-be reporters and analysts. I do not, however, believe I have ever seen quite so great a mass of distortion compressed into quite so small a space as in Gershman's job. It would take a dozen pages to correct each of his, shall we say, misunderstandings. There are four, however, that are exceptionally important.

1) Gershman writes: "Far from opposing Nazism, [Bober] charged, Zionists were dependent upon it as a justification of their existence. That is why swastikas 'filled them wth joy.'" Now what in fact I said was that Zionism has an *ambivalent* attitude toward anti-Semitism. And I *explained* this ambivalence as follows: On the one hand, Zionists of course hate and oppose anti-Semitism because it injures and threatens the survival of the Jews. On the other hand, the absence of anti-Semitism in the Gentile world seems to be conducive to Jewish assimilation and hence to threaten the survival of "Jewishness"—for Zionists the supreme value. At the same time, Zionists and anti-Semites tend to share one *practical* goal: the removal of the Jews from predominantly non-Jewish societies—the anti-Semites to be rid of them, the Zionists to concentrate them in the Jewish state.

I *documented* this ambivalence by referring to the *practice* of Zionist leaders in their relations with political anti-Semites from the Herzl-Plehve negotiations to the Kastner-Eichmann agreement. I also documented it by citing the *words* of Zionist publicists from Herzl to Uri Harary.

In particular, I cited an article by Harary in the February 9, 1969 issue of the Israeli paper, *Yediot Aharonot*. "It is, of course," he wrote, "not customary for us to talk about it in public, but many of us felt a tiny bit of joy when we read newspaper reports about the swastika epidemic in Europe in 1960 or about the pro-Nazi movement in Argentina. Today, too, we have very mixed feelings when we read about the growing anti-Jewishness of Negro leaders in America." Gershman misquoted my accurate rendering of Harary's words, and he then attributed his twisted version of Harary's words to me. So much for Gershman's reportorial pretensions.

2) "Bober reiterated all the tired and tiresome left-wing platitudes about Zionism's ties to colonialism and imperialism." In the thick brew of Rhodesia, Algeria, Israel, and "the white man's burden" that Gershman delivers up following this sentence, I don't suppose any reader could have found any clear idea at all, much less any idea I expressed. What I in fact said was not, I think, so hard to reproduce briefly and accurately. The Zionist movement, I pointed out, was and is a colonizing movement that displaced and expelled the indigenous population of Palestine and that, with the State of Israel as its instrument, continues to do so today. Moreover, to carry out this colonization, the Zionist movement had to and did ally itself with the dominant big power in the region—first England and now the U.S.—which the masses of the whole Arab world were increasingly coming to regard—quite correctly—as their imperialist oppressors. The result is that today the Israeli-Jewish nation which was created by this colonization finds itself in a doubly antagonistic relation to the Arab world: it is a colonial oppressor of all the Arab masses. They must fight it as long as it remains in this relation to them. Gershman may regard all this as "tired and tiresome left-wing platitudes," but these are the fundamental, massive facts about the Middle East, and no one can understand or do anything about the "Arab-Israeli" conflict who does not grasp them.

3) Gershman writes: "A popular view on the Left today is that a 'fair' settlement of the Middle East conflict requires the creation of a

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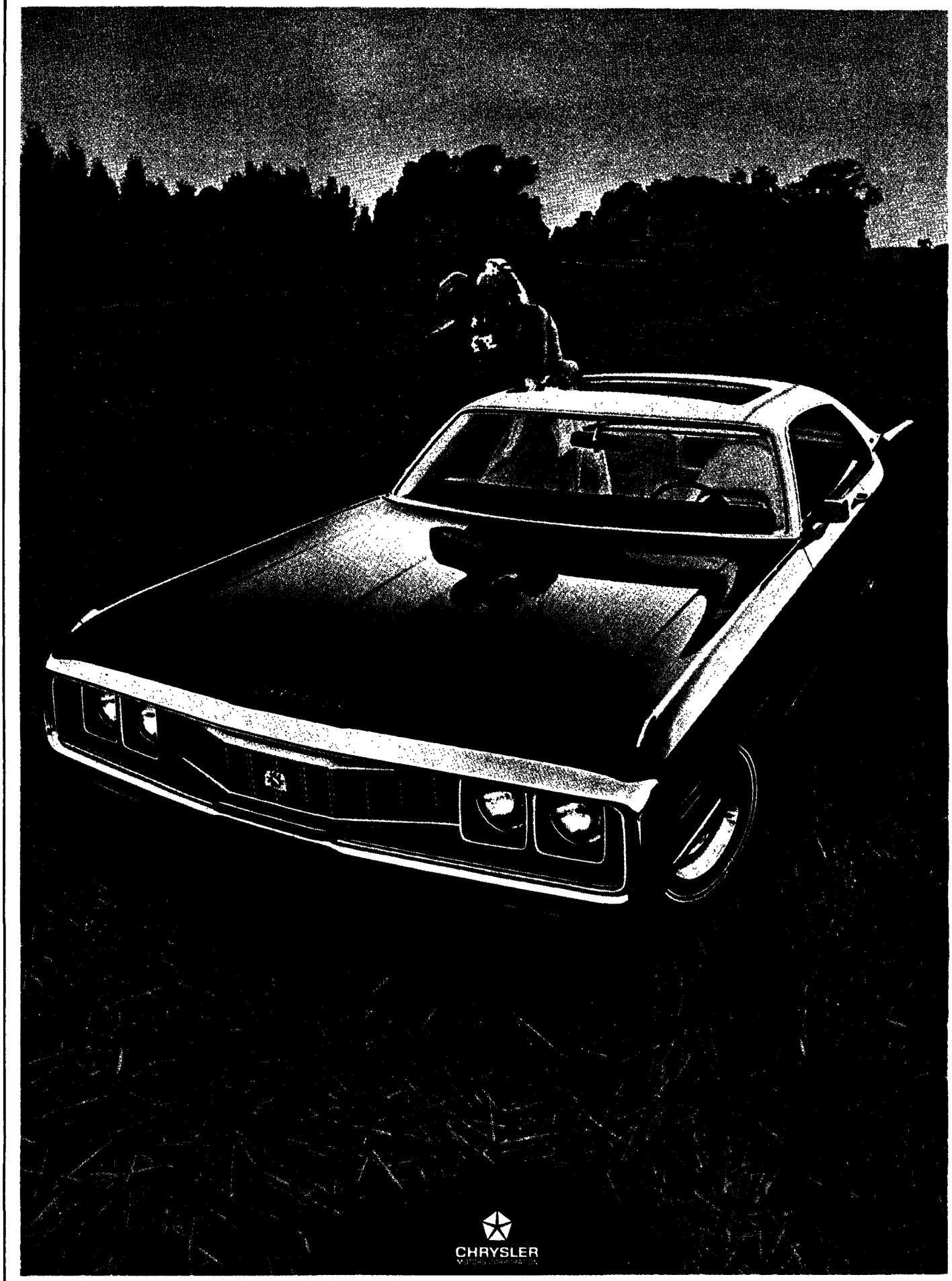

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bi-national state in what is now Israel. [Noam] Chomsky supports this position, so does Al Fatah which has called for a 'secular, democratic, pluralist Palestinian State,' and so does Bober in calling for the 'de-Zionization' of Israel." It is difficult to know how to begin to disentangle this weird amalgam. Chomsky and Fatah can speak for themselves; I only want to comment on Fatah's position so far as it is necessary to define Matzpen's.

We support the right of the Palestinians to fight against their national oppression by any means they think advisable. But this does not imply political agreement with any particular organization involved in that struggle. Our political goal—a socialist Middle East in which all national minorities, including the Israeli Jews, have the right of self-determination—differs fundamentally from the Fatah goal of a "secular, democratic Palestinian state." For this slogan is based on the assumption that the Palestinian question can be isolated from the rest of the Arab world; on the assumption that the Israeli Jews are a religious rather than a national group; and on the assumption that the social character of a liberated Palestine—whether it is socialist or capitalist—is a matter of indifference. All three of these assumptions, Matzpen believes, are false.

Our demand for the de-Zionization of Israel we conceive precisely as a step toward this goal. It means 1) the abrogation of all laws and practices conferring on Jews (whether Israeli Jews or Jews of the Diaspora) privileges at the expense of the Palestinians—especially the Law of Return; 2) the repatriation of all Palestinians who want to return and the compensation for their losses of all those who do not want to return; 3) the rupture of all economic and political ties with the capitalist countries and Jewish communities who are, in fact, hostage to those powers. The realization of this program would, for the first time, manifest the Israeli Jews' willingness to live with, instead of against and at the expense of, their neighbors; it would end the Israeli-Jewish nation's double antagonism toward its neighbors.

4) Gershman failed to give a single hint about the main emphasis of my talk. Indeed, by including me among "those who want to destroy Israel," he suggests the exact opposite of everything I said. I insisted that, in the long run, the real question is, How can the Israeli Jews—a tiny minority in the region—survive in the Arab East? If the Israeli Jewish masses are not split from Zionism, if they will fight to the end for the Zionist state which makes them the colonial oppressor of the Palestinians and a partner in the imperialist oppression of all the Arab masses, if they do not find their way to a joint struggle with the Arab masses against Zionism, imperialism, and Arab reaction—then there will be another Holocaust. Eventually, the Arab revolution is going to win; if the masses of the Israeli Jews are not incorporated in it, they will necessarily be consumed by it.

If three million more Jews perish, some part of the responsibility will lie with those writers like Gershman who obscure for [their] readers . . . this stark truth.

We know that the Israeli Jewish masses can be split from Zionism, simply because it has failed to accomplish its own goals. It has not concentrated the Jews of the world in Palestine. It has not ended Jewish persecution. It has not incorporated the Oriental Jews as equal partners in the Jewish homeland. It has not created a free, independent, open society but an oppressive ghetto utterly delivered over to the tender mercies of the rulers of the United States. It has not guaranteed the physical safety of the inhabitants of the Jewish state; it offers them no future but unending warfare and eventual annihilation. If there is time, therefore, we, the Israeli Jewish revolutionaries will be able to persuade the great majority of our people that their only future lies in a joint struggle with their Arab brothers and sisters against the common oppressor.

The only reconciliation between Arab and Jew in the Arab East will be a revolutionary reconciliation.

ARIE BOBER
National Committee Member
Israeli Socialist Organization
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The main burden of Carl Gershman's "observations" on the Committee on New Alternatives in the Middle East seems to be that

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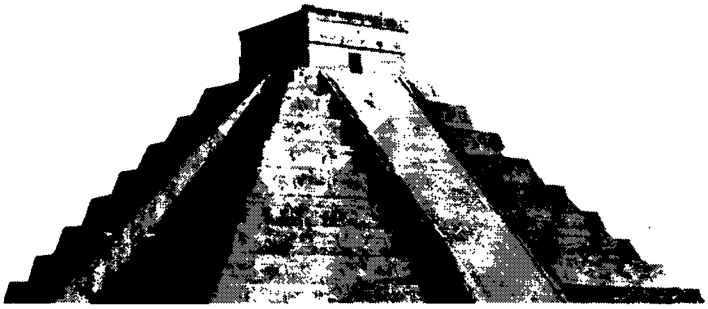

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Noam Chomsky, acting in collusion with the Trotskyists of the Socialist Workers party—of which I, the Committee's secretary, am a member—duped a number of respected individuals into sponsoring a speaking tour for Arie Bober of the Israeli Socialist Organization, with whom many of them would not wish to have been associated if they had been informed by Chomsky or me of his real views. Most of these sponsors are, however, not completely innocent. One of them, David Deitch, for example, devoted two of his Boston *Globe* columns to Bober without informing his readers that he is a sponsor of the Committee. (One must wonder, incidentally, why Gershman, who is so concerned that everyone involved in anything lay all his political cards on the table—he is also very careful to "expose" me as a Trotskyist—does not indicate his own political affiliations.) What is worse, though, is that many of these dupes "would probably agree with the substance of Bober's position, finding fault, if at all, only with his harsh rhetoric." Or in other words, according to Gershman these people were duped into supporting a position they agree with!

But Gershman has it all wrong. No one was duped into anything. Chomsky's description of Matzpen in his letter inviting others to join him in sponsoring the Committee is about the most accurate one-sentence statement possible of Matzpen's complex position—though, it is true, no one could guess that from the fantasy Gershman tries to palm off as a report on Bober's Columbia University meeting. As for the sinister "unsigned letter" written on Committee stationery—it too is factually accurate, though Gershman may disagree with its characterization of Bober personally. (Incidentally, this "letter" was not a letter but a leaflet, and leaflets are not usually signed. As secretary of the Committee, I am, of course, responsible for its contents. And it was designed not to attract sponsors but as big an audience as possible to a specific meeting.)

Chomsky's letter clearly stated that its recipient was being asked to sponsor the Committee for the Bober tour and that any further activities would require the concurrence of each of the sponsors. This has been strictly adhered to. The Committee has taken no position on anything. It has issued no statement, leaflet, or letter except those directly connected with organizing the Bober tour. The only literature it has announced plans to publish is the transcript of Bober's talk; the only other literature it has mentioned is ISRAC, the English-language publication of Matzpen members and supporters abroad, which Bober made available to his audiences and which I brought to the attention of those on the Committee's mailing list.

Gershman asserts, without offering a particle of evidence, that "most of the sponsors would probably agree with the substance of Bober's position"—though he seems not quite able to make up his mind about it. I simply do not know. Most of the sponsors haven't written anything on the Middle East, at least that I have read, and I don't know most of them personally. I do know that neither Chomsky nor I ever asked any potential sponsor about his or her position on the Middle East or anything else. There is no "political test" you have to take to become a CONAME sponsor. The sponsors agree necessarily on only two things: Bober's right to speak in this country and the importance of his point of view being heard here.

Contrary to what Gershman claims, the purpose and effect of the chairman of meetings reading a partial list of the Committee's sponsors was not to confer "implicit legitimation on what Bober was about to say." It could not accomplish this because it was always accompanied by a specific disclaimer: that the sponsors do not necessarily agree with Bober or with one another. What it was expected to do was confer quite explicit legitimation on Bober's right to speak and on the importance—not necessarily truth—of his message.

In fairness to two individuals, one consequence of Gershman's generally incompetent journalism requires specific correction. Murray Kempton and Carey McWilliams were not, when I spoke to Gershman on the telephone, sponsors of CONAME, and I did not tell Gershman they were. They did host a reception for Bober, and that is what I said. I am happy to be able to report, however, that since Gershman's hatchet job appeared, Murray Kempton has decided to become a sponsor of the Committee.

BERTA LANGSTON
Secretary, Committee on New Alternatives in the Middle East
New York City

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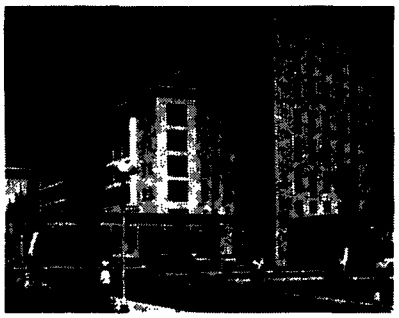

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To the Editor of Commentary:

It was with horror that I read Carl Gershman's " 'Matzpen' and Its Sponsors." I know nothing of Arie Bober, but if what Mr. Gershman reports him to have said is true, then I wish to repudiate utterly and completely any association with such views and the Committee on New Alternatives in the Middle East. Furthermore, if Professor Chomsky was aware of Bober's views I believe some explanation from him is forthcoming. A copy of this letter has gone to him with a request to remove my name from the list of sponsors.

Ashley Montagu

Princeton, New Jersey

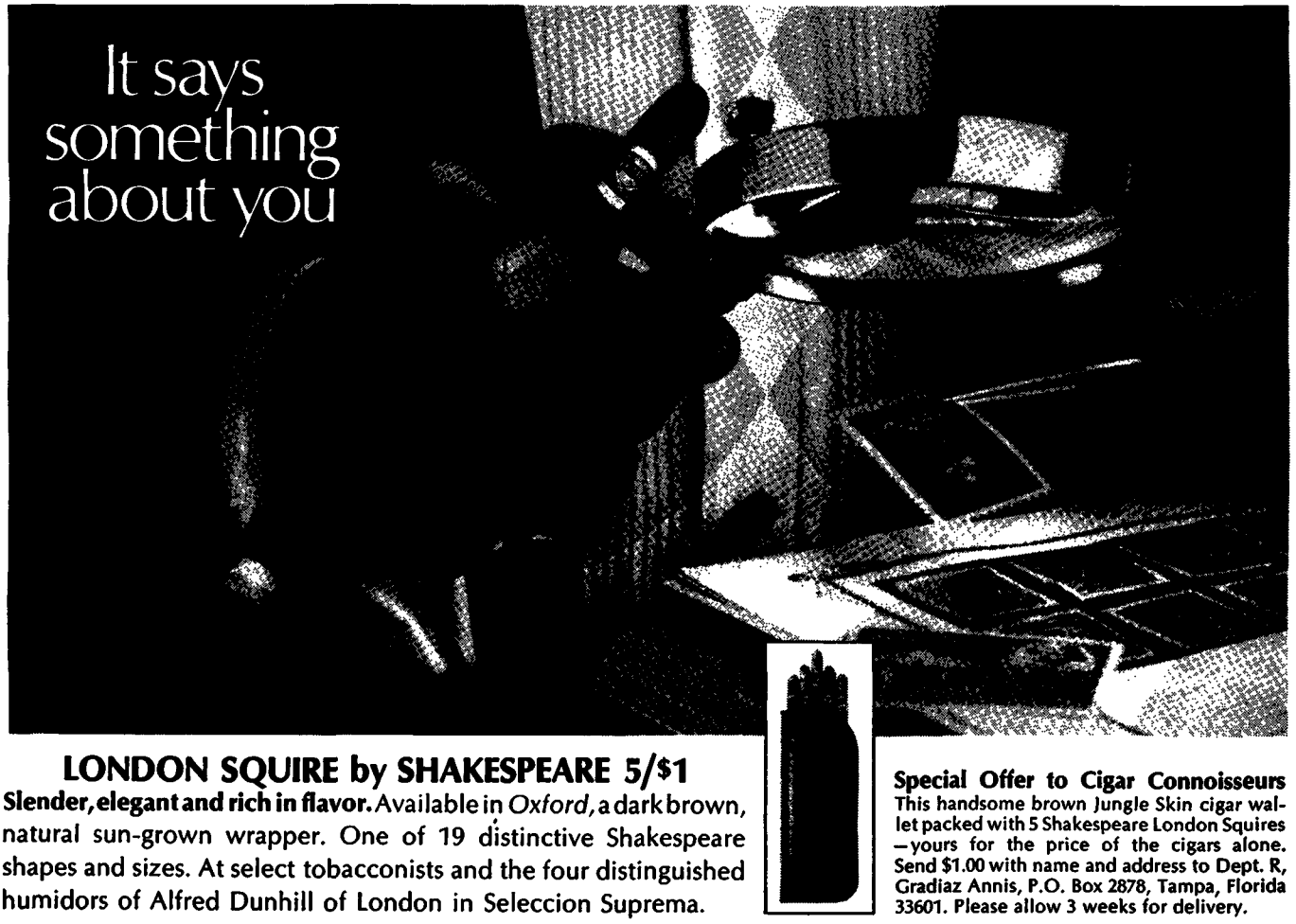
To the Editor of Commentary:

Carl Gershman's article is inaccurate in several respects. As the title indicates, Mr. Gershman seeks to convey the impression that the Committee on New Alternatives in the Middle East is a "sponsor" of the Matzpen group. However, he provides sufficient information to refute his own assertion. Thus he quotes a letter which states clearly that the Committee will "take no specific stand on the Middle East." Rather, the letter continues, the Committee "will try to encourage discussion and debate of fundamental issues in the present Middle East crisis, and specifically, try to introduce left-wing voices that are rarely heard in the United States." Furthermore, "association with the Committee as a sponsor does not entail agreement with the political position of Matzpen. . . . Rather, it indicates only a belief that these voices should be heard."

With this purpose, the Committee sponsored a speaking tour for Arie Bober of Matzpen as it will, I hope, for others whose views may be quite different from his. Mr. Gershman apparently cannot see the distinction between advocating certain views and advocating that such views be heard. The distinction, however, is a clear and crucial one.

Gershman's failure to comprehend this distinction is revealed in his account of Bober's lecture at Columbia. He writes that "the reading of the names of the sponsors" by Professor Edward Said "served as an implicit legitimation of what Bober was about to say." In fact, the reading of the names (as Said correctly stated, "a widely divergent list with many different views represented") served as a "legitimation" of Bober's right to be heard. Specifically, sponsorship clearly implies the belief that it would be valuable for his views to be heard, which implies neither support for his views, nor acceptance of "some measure of responsibility for his views," as Gershman illogically concludes, in direct conflict to the explicit statement of the letter from which he quotes.

The Matzpen group, as I understand its position, holds that the Israeli people "now constitutes a national entity," as do the Palestinian Arabs (ISRAC, 1970, No. 2). Each group has the right of self-determination and of separation (though Matzpen does not advocate that that right be exercised). Thus they propose a bi-national structure in a socialist Palestine in which the national rights of both groups will be recognized. As international socialists, they oppose the policies of Israel and the Arab states, and look forward to a social-



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ist transformation of the Middle East. Such a position, as Mr. Gershman correctly states, "involves the dissolution of the State of Israel" as presently constituted, and the dissolution of the Arab States, as well. The same is true (with regard to Israel and Jordan) of any binational or even federal approach, for example, those discussed sympathetically by Norman Bentwich, formerly Professor of International Relations at the Hebrew University, in *New Outlook,* March-April 1970. Mr. Gershman apparently finds such views horrifying, as is his right. To me it seems that they should be openly and freely discussed.

There are several factual inaccuracies in the article. Mr. Gershman states that Matzpen "has expressed its full support for the 'resistance' of Palestinian terrorists to 'Zionist oppression.' . . ." In fact, Matzpen "recognize[s] the right and duty of every conquered and oppressed people to resist occupation and to struggle for its freedom," but "reject[s] the positions of both Al-Fatah . . . and the Popular Front. . . ." (ISRAC, No. 2, 1970). It therefore supports the right of resistance to occupation and oppression but not the political programs or the specific actions of the Palestinian groups. More generally, it supports "the revolutionary struggle for a new society in the Middle East, including Israel."

Mr. Gershman states that Al Fatah supports the creation of a binational state. All Fatah statements that I have seen explicitly reject bi-nationalism. To my knowledge, among the Palestinian Arab organizations the Democratic Front is unique in recognizing Jewish national rights. Mr. Gershman also asserts that the program of Fatah is to "expel all Jews above the number that lived in Palestine before 1917." The Palestine National Covenant (published with an analysis by Y. Harkabi in *Maariv,* December 12, 1969), might be interpreted in this way. In contrast, the journal *Fatah* (Beirut, November 20, 1969) states that the Palestinians "are redefining their objectives and are finding the goal of creating a new Palestine that encompasses them and the present Jewish settlers a very desirable one." In a continuation of this article (January 19), it is stated that "The revolution rejects the supposition that only Jews who lived in Palestine prior to 1948 or prior to 1914 and their descendants are acceptable" and asserts that "all Jewish Palestinians—at the present Israelis," including "non-Arab Jews (Western Jews)," may be citizens in the "new Palestine" (which will have Arabic and Hebrew as official languages). I am not at all sure how to evaluate these statements. However, given the available information, I do not see how Mr. Gershman can be so certain as to what the Fatah program is, particularly when his interpretation is explicitly contradicted in at least some statements of Fatah. In fact, there has been an interesting evolution in the ideology of the Palestinian groups, and although I do not personally believe that they offer a viable program at present, I think that this evolution is a healthy sign, and perhaps suggests some possibility, still unfortunately remote, of peaceful reconciliation.

Mr. Gershman also reports on Bober's talk at Columbia. Since I was not present, I cannot comment on the accuracy of this report. I think some skepticism is legitimate, given his errors where an independent check is possible.

I write this letter with some reluctance, fully expecting that those who cannot distinguish inference from free association will interpret what I have just said as support for Fatah or Matzpen or will conclude irrationally that I am a spokesman for the Committee mentioned earlier, since I commented on misrepresentations of its goals and possible functions. Personally, I am in favor of broadening the range of discussion of the Middle East in the United States, and will gladly encourage and (if it will be helpful) sponsor speaking tours, debates, etc., involving Israelis, Arabs, and others whose views I do not necessarily share. I hope that others will agree that this is a worthwhile enterprise, and will not accept the fallacious argument that to provide a forum is necessarily to support the views expressed or to take responsibility for them. Those who are totally convinced that their views represent absolute and unchallengeable truth will see no necessity for further discussion, but others who feel that many fundamental issues are still debatable may be pardoned if they reject such dogmatism.

NOAM CHOMSKY
Department of Linguistics
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I plead guilty to unintentionally having neglected to inform readers of my sponsorship of the Committee on New Alternatives in the Middle East. It's a pity that Carl Gershman didn't display his own affiliations along with his biases. Or does he believe that the requirements of writing a newspaper column are somehow different from writing for a Zionist magazine? Readers of my advocacy columns in the Boston *Globe* for almost three years know perfectly well that I have made no attempt to hide my political biases behind the mask of the specious objectivity demanded by Gershman for others but not himself.

You might be interested to know that no article I've written on any subject has drawn to me such an organized response of unmitigated hatred and personal harassment as the two-column interview with Arie Bober. Unsure of my own feelings about Zionism six months ago, but believing it perfectly logical that Bober deserved a hearing in the United States, I find that the experience I've gone through since publication of the Bober interview has done much to make up my mind. Gershman's piece is just another symptom of the hysterical chauvinism affecting Zionist Jews in so many places.

I also find interesting Gershman's claim that sponsorship of the Bober tour confers "implicit legitimation on what Bober was about to say." On two occasions I offered Israeli students who came to see me an opportunity to debate Bober on the crucial issues, to be tape-recorded and published in a series of articles under my by-line. They refused, indicating that they had no wish to dignify Bober's position by appearing on the same platform with him.

DAVID DEITCH
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I listened attentively to various formal lectures given recently by Arie Bober and had the opportunity to discuss informally with Bober the substance of his and Matzpen's philosophy, and I am distressed by Carl Gershman's article. Mr. Gershman not only offers an incomplete analysis of what Bober said and has said, he even quotes and cites Bober out of context. I am not necessarily surprised, however, by Mr. Gershman's misleading and unfair treatment of

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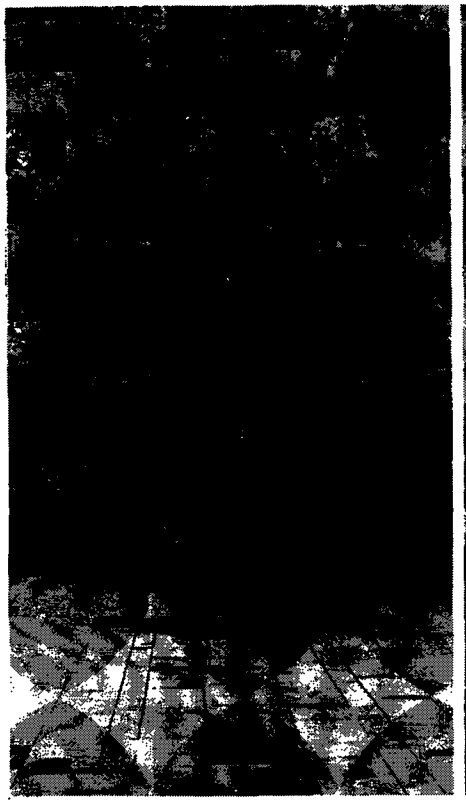

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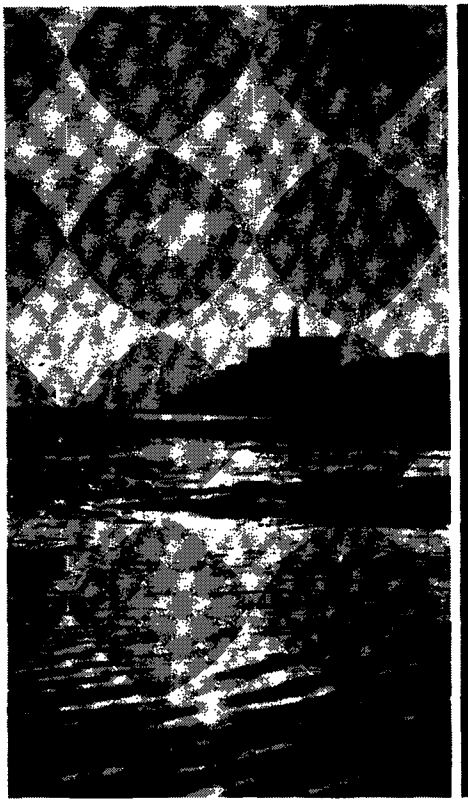

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Bober's lecture(s) and the Matzpen position. Mr. Gershman's real intent seems to be to dissuade some of those who sponsored the Bober lecture tour from sponsoring future lecture tours of those who disagree *radically* with the official Zionist position. . . .

NORTON MEZVINSKY
Central Connecticut State College
New Britain, Connecticut

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I attended Bober's meeting at Columbia University. If he was guilty of some polemical exaggeration, so is Mr. Gershman in his description of the meeting—I would say: even more so.

ERIC BENTLEY
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In response to Carl Gershman's comment I should like to say that my own belief in a bi-national Palestinian state derives, not from Arie Bober, but from the late Martin Buber; and that I understand this position not as a call for the dismemberment or destruction of the State of Israel, but as a hope for its enhancement, for what one might call its "enmemberment" by incorporating the Arab population which once lived there.

STAUGHTON LYND
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . I do not happen to be a sponsor of the Committee on New Alternatives in the Middle East, partly because I have not been asked and partly because I should have to think a while about joining in any case. My admiration and respect for Noam Chomsky are limitless; but we do have some disagreements; one of them would seem to be that I retain traces of solidarity with Israel as a garrison state and he does not.

Nonetheless, Mr. Gershman is entitled to the misapprehension that I am a co-sponsor of the Committee, since I agreed to be a host to Mr. Arie Bober at his first reception in America. Unfortunately, I was unable to be present and do those duties; and I'm afraid I shall not have the chance to meet Bober while he is in this country. Mr. Gershman can certainly argue that the distinction I put forward is not a difference, but I think it is. Bober comes here from a community for which I have great affection and the hardening of whose temper arouses in me a mixture of sympathy, pity, and some alarm. The right of a man of the opposition in a democratic country to have a hearing when he goes abroad seems to me elementary. Being a host does, of course, involve considerations of one's private taste: I am pleased to welcome Bober, despite wide intellectual differences, where I should be hard put to welcome someone from Al Fatah because of what I should hope to be differences in spirit. But if I have a sense of delinquency in this case, it was not in having agreed to be Bober's host but in having failed to do him what infinitesimal honor that might be in person.

I shall leave Chomsky, whose ability to take care of himself has been superbly proven in your own correspondence columns, the job of engaging Mr. Gershman's lapse in lumping him with Al Fatah in a common identity. I cannot, absent

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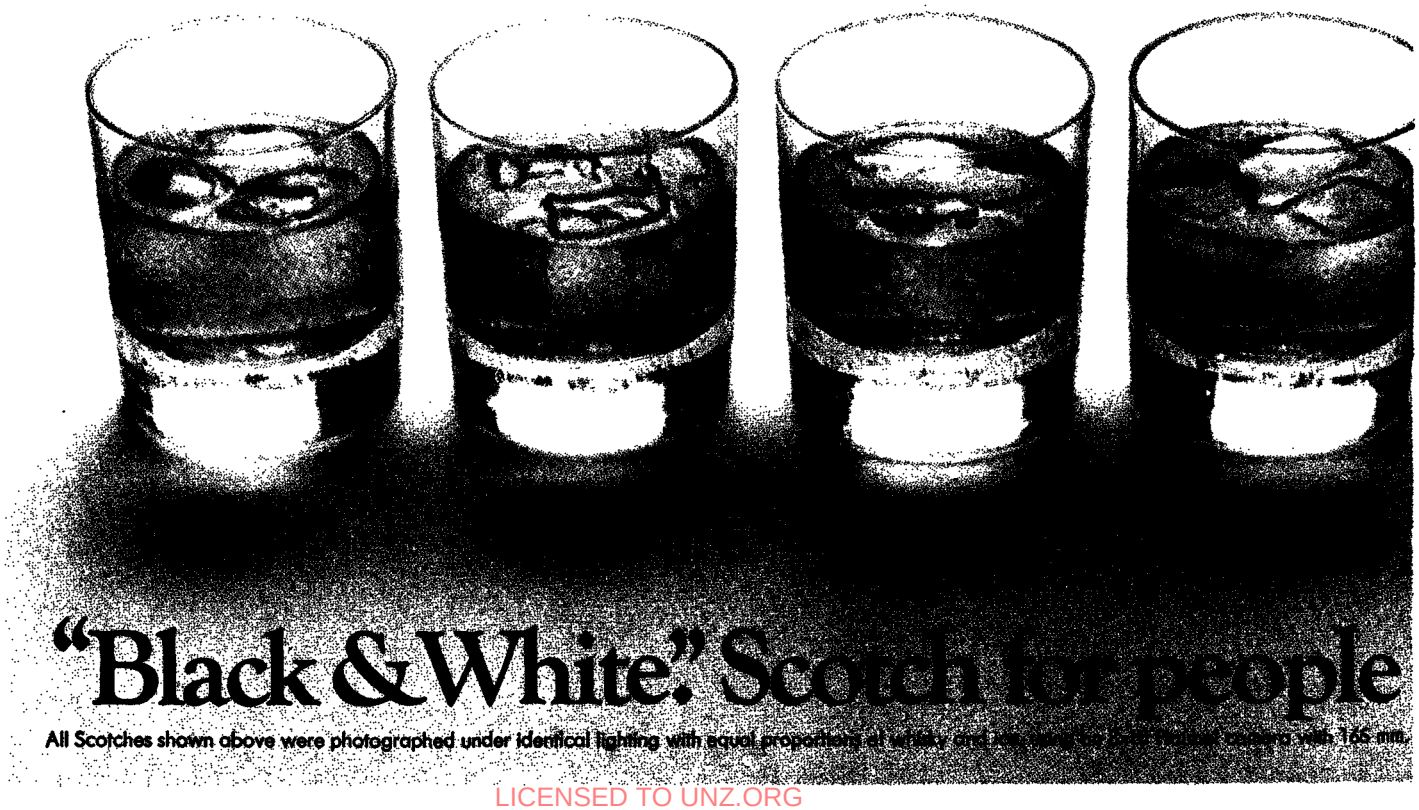

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the chance to talk to Bober himself, comment on Mr. Gershman's summary of his message; perhaps you understand that anyone who has spent as much time as I in the construction of summaries of the opinions of persons with whom I profoundly disagree might have developed a perhaps unfair distrust of this sort of thing even done by better men.

May I tangentially congratulate Mr. Gershman for having avoided the suggestion that such persons as oppose the policy of a foreign state, however admirable, are anti-Semitic if they are not Jewish and self-hating if they are. His elders in COMMENTARY have been less judicious of late. I thought it better to let pass the implication that anti-Zionism or even concern for the rights under law of an anti-Zionist equals anti-Semitism which ran through Nathan Glazer's piece on the Cleaver Defense Committee last year ["Blacks, Jews, and the Intellectuals," COMMENTARY, April 1969]. I have noticed with some depression but no impulse to protest what seems to me an increasingly mean-spirited, not to say vulgar tendency in Messrs. Podhoretz and Himmelfarb toward group abuse of Anglo-Saxon Protestants. One excuses this sort of thing in one's friends, except in the case of genuinely vulnerable ethnic groups, but it does rather try the patience. Still, one also gets used to ebbs and flows in the taste and sensibility of COMMENTARY; you can be trusted to return to manners according to the rhythm from which you seem to depart them. In the interim, to point to an example of delicacy in one of your writers may serve in the gentlest way possible to remind some of the others of its absence in them.

MURRAY KEMPTON

New York City

CARL GERSHMAN writes:

I refer those correspondents (Kempton, Chomsky, and Mezvinsky) who did not attend the Bober meeting and doubt the accuracy of my reporting, and those (Bentley and Langston) who did attend and question that accuracy, to Arie Bober's own letter which provides conclusive confirmation of my report. While Mr. Bober claims to be correcting the "distortions" in my piece, he actually ends up repeating the very words I attributed to him. He also elaborates upon ideas which I thought sufficiently straightforward to stand on their own without lengthy exegesis. The fact that he can describe such reporting (along with the "character assassination" perpetrated by "the Zionist Establishment") as surpassing the excesses of the late Senator McCarthy says less about the character of my journalistic abilities than about Mr. Bober's own paranoia.

Let me respond briefly to Mr. Bober's four points:

1) Mr. Bober merely used the Harary quote to document his own contention—the basis for which I described—that swastikas in particular and Nazism in general were a great source of pleasure to Zionists.

2) Far from disproving my contention that his "analysis" of Zionism's ties to colonialism and imperialism was a reiteration of "tired and tiresome left-wing platitudes," Mr. Bober now adds to the series of overworked slo-

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gans which I referred to in my article by calling Israel "a colonial oppressor of all the Arab masses."

3) Mr. Bober's statement that "We support the right of the Palestinians to fight against their national oppression by any means they think advisable" is almost a word-for-word repetition of the quotation I cited in my article. I would particularly like to call Professor Chomsky's attention to this statement since he seems to be under the impression that Matzpen does not support "the specific actions"—i.e., the terrorism—of the Palestinians. I will come to the question of "political" disagreements with the Palestinians later.

4) Finally, Mr. Bober explains why he favors a dissolution of the State of Israel—to save the Jews. (Every cause, it seems, must be justified by an appeal to higher motives.) I felt, and still feel, that it was enough to point out simply that he was for the termination of Israel's existence. This he does not deny. (In this connection, I was interested to discover that the major portion of Mr. Bober's letter has already been published—in the August 31 issue of *Action*, a paper edited by the extremist Dr. M. T. Mehdi of the Action Committee on American-Arab Relations.)

BEFORE getting on to two other larger matters—the political nature of the Commitee on New Alternatives in the Middle East and the ideological evolution of the Palestinian groups—I want to dispose of several minor points raised by Miss Langston and David Deitch. First, it should not be so difficult to understand why it concerns me that Mr. Deitch, the author of two favorable articles on Bober which appeared in the Boston *Globe*, was not identified in the newspaper as a sponsor of the Committee on New Alternatives. Miss Langston and Mr. Deitch read into this concern an undue preoccupation with political affiliations; in fact, what I was doing was pointing to a clear instance of unethical journalism. Since my article was written, the *Globe* has printed still another piece by Deitch (again without identifying him) which damns Israel and lauds Bober. Unlike the *Globe*, COMMENTARY (which is not, as Mr. Deitch in characteristically indiscriminate fashion asserts, a "Zionist magazine") does make a practice of identifying its contributors. The author's note to my piece specified my association with the Youth Committee for Peace and Democracy in the Middle East and with the A. Philip Randolph Institute. (To forestall yet another letter from Mr. Deitch, I hereby also declare my association with the Young People's Socialist League.)

Miss Langston incorrectly claims that there is a contradiction between criticizing Chomsky for not explicitly describing the nature of Bober's politics in a letter to proposed sponsors of the Committee, and at the same time suggesting that most of the sponsors would have joined the Committee even if Chomsky had been more explicit. What I actually said was that a few of the sponsors may have been misled about the nature of the Committee and might not have become sponsors if they had been more clearly informed. Ashley Montagu's letter above proves me right.

As to the unsigned letter which was used as a leaflet, the main point is not whether it was a letter or a leaflet, it is that a statement describing Bober in glowing terms was printed on stationery listing the names of all the sponsors. Surely, the names were used in this way for no other reason than to suggest that the sponsors endorsed the statement.

Finally, if any apologies are due Murray Kempton and Carey McWilliams, they should come from Miss Langston herself. It was she who told me that they were sponsors, not on the phone but when I approached her after the Columbia meeting.

The main criticism of my article that is made by Chomsky, Kempton, and Miss Langston is that I failed to distinguish, as Professor Chomsky writes, between "advocating certain views and advocating that such views be heard." Mr. Kempton writes that "the right of a man of the opposition in a democratic country to have a hearing when he goes abroad seems to me elementary." Who is denying that right? Certainly not I. But the fact that I defend Bober's civil liberties does not mean that I would sponsor his speaking tour. That's the real distinction. Chomsky, Kempton, and Miss Langston no doubt

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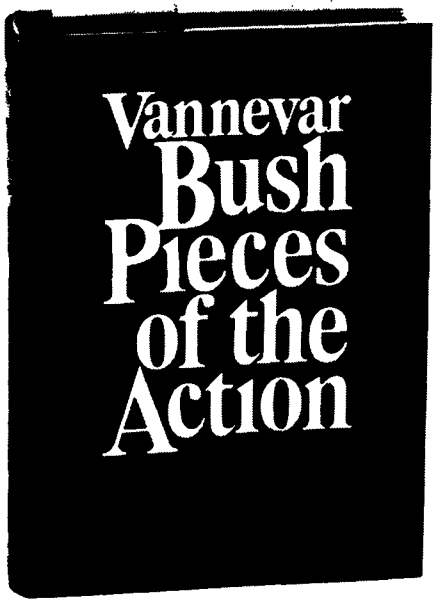

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would defend Menahem Begin's right to speak in the United States, but I hardly think they would sponsor *his* speaking tour. Obviously there is an element of political approval involved in this kind of sponsorship, and attempts to deny that there is sound disingenuous at best and a bit dishonest at worst. (Professor Chomsky evidently missed my ironic intent in quoting several ritualistic professions of political neutrality.)

In any event, doubts remaining as to the political nature of the Committee on New Alternatives can be cleared up by quoting a passage from a letter it sent out (again listing all the sponsors) dated February 14, 1970. The letter requested help in finding additional sponsors, but cautioned that "Although we solicit and welcome support from the various groups that represent Mideast liberation movements (Arab Students Assn., etc.) serious difficulties for our speakers might result if they were used as public sponsors of the Committee." This is one of the less graceful ways to describe the functioning of a pro-Arab front group.

Professor Chomsky's attempt to point out errors I made in treating the Palestinians actually backfires since it undermines his own credibility. He identifies "a healthy sign" in the evolution of Palestinian ideology by quoting out of context the Fatah claim that "all Jewish Palestinians—at the present Israelis" will be acceptable in a Palestinian state. He does not tell us that Abu Iyad, one of the Fatah leaders, has qualified the above statement by limiting the numbers of Jews only to those Jews "who will be ready to abandon their racist ideology" (*Jeune Afrique*, March 3, 1970). Perhaps Professor Chomsky is ignorant of this qualification. Obviously, however, from his reference to Harkabi he knows that the "democratic" position the Palestinians present to the world is quite different from the ruthless position they adhere to internally. Thus the 1968 Palestinian National Covenant which advocates the removal of 99 per cent of the Jews from a Palestinian State was not published in English (while the much milder 1964 Covenant was) precisely because it was meant to be an internal document which would have been an embarrassment to the Palestinians were it ever made public. But since Harkabi (an Israeli) translated it, the Palestinians seem to have been making a tactical shift in their line. The Democratic Popular Front, with which Matzpen has political relations, is a co-signer of the 1968 Covenant. As for the recent evolution of Palestinian ideology which Professor Chomsky finds healthy, it should be noted that at the last meeting of the Palestinian Assembly (May 30 to June 4 of this year) the Democratic Popular Front and the Fatah clearly declared that the 1968 Covenant must *not* be amended (cf. Harkabi's report in *Ma'ariv*, July 10, 1970).

Either Professor Chomsky is aware of these facts and is hiding them—something I am reluctant to believe of one who has written so stirringly about the intellectual's responsibility to the truth—or he is ignorant of them and therefore does not know what he is talking about when he discusses the politics of the Palestinian terrorists.

One final point. I never said that the positions of Chomsky, Bober, and the Fatah are identical. I explicitly stated that they "might disagree over the details" of how to put an end to Israel's existence. Chomsky's bi-nationalism, Bober's de-Zionization, Fatah's "democratic" state, and—a new term—Staughton Lynd's "enmemberment" are not identical except (to repeat) on one crucial point: "they are in basic agreement that the State of Israel should be dismembered." The Arab-Israeli conflict is not a linguistic dispute but a political and military struggle, and the fundamental issue of contention is Israel's right to exist—something its opponents, whatever euphemisms they employ, are still unwilling to grant.

Ripostes

[*The following letters refer to some of the remarks about* COMMENTARY *generally in Murray Kempton's letter, above.*]

NORMAN PODHORETZ writes:

I was surprised to see Murray Kempton, of all people, characterizing as a species of "group abuse" certain recent analyses in COMMENTARY of the political interests and predispositions of Anglo-Saxon Protestants. Mr. Kempton himself, to his credit, has never hesitated to engage in the frank discussion of ethnic behavior as a significant factor in American politics; nor has COMMENTARY ever been inhibited (though always remaining, I hope, within the bounds of good taste and fair comment) in its treatment of ethnic groups other than Anglo-Saxon Protestants, including, of course, the Jews. It is strange to be attacked at this late date as ill-mannered and vulgar for talking in the same way about Anglo-Saxon Protestants. But of course the refusal to recognize itself as an ethnic group like any other has always been one of the prime WASP ethnic characteristics, as has its habit of instructing others in matters of manners and taste. Perhaps on both these counts, then, Mr. Kempton's scolding should be taken as an especially elegant expression of his own ethnic heritage.

Mr. Kempton, by the way, is quite right in deploring as "injudicious" the tendency always to identify anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism. I hope he would agree that it is equally injudicious to fail to see the identity of the two in many cases, especially these days and especially on the radical Left.

NATHAN GLAZER writes:

Mr. Kempton is very careless in his brief reference to my article. There was no "implication" that "anti-Zionism or even concern for the rights under law of an anti-Zionist equals anti-Semitism." None at all. My point was that many intellectuals, by encouraging extremism in thought and action, had helped create an environment in which black anti-Semitism could be expressed, and grow. The appeal for Eldridge Cleaver was only one of a number of examples. There *was* an implication in my article that the signers of that appeal had associated themselves (because of the appeal, and where it appeared, not because they were defending Cleaver's rights) in some degree with his political positions. Mr. Kempton should have addressed himself to that implication, not the outrageous one he has so casually attributed to me.

MILTON HIMMELFARB writes:

I am *not* vulgar. I am very refined. Neither am I mean-spirited. I am known far and wide for magnanimity.

Folklore

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In the opening sentences of his review of my books on *The British Folklorists* [Books in Review, July] Robert Ackerman makes serious errors about the current state

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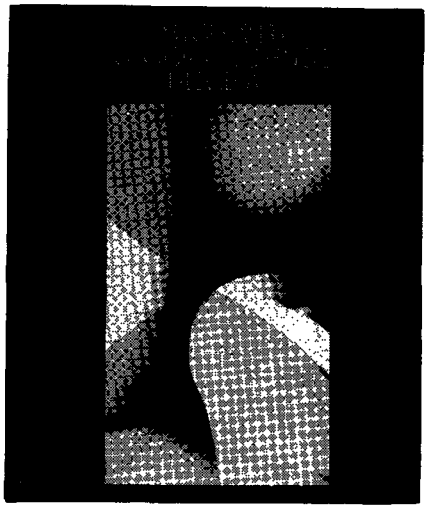

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of folklore studies. He says that few folklorists are at work today, that the study of folklore seems to have run its course, and that it is back in the hands of amateur enthusiasts. This is totally wrong. Mr. Ackerman was probably misled into these generalizations by my own account of the British folklore movement, but the history of folklore studies in the United States and in Europe is very different from its history in England.

The vigorous development of folklore as a discipline in American universities is one of the remarkable stories of the present academic scene. In 1957, when I became chairman of the Folklore Program at Indiana University, six students were seeking M.A.'s and Ph.D.'s in folklore. Today, over one hundred graduate students are enrolled, and the undergraduate courses have risen from about fifty to over one thousand students. I have myself directed twenty-eight doctoral dissertations, and these Ph.D's in folklore have joined faculties from the University of Maine to the University of California and at a number of foreign universities. They have in turn developed their own courses and programs. At the University of California, Berkeley, Alan Dundes has attracted up to seven hundred students in his folklore lectures, and introduced a master's program in folklore. Other universities apart from Indiana and its Ph.D's have also initiated folklore programs. The University of Pennsylvania has a graduate department of Folklore and Folklife with sixty higher-degree candidates. Proposals for doctoral programs are under way at the University of Texas and the University of California at Los Angeles. At Harvard, where thirty years ago I could find no specialist in folklore to direct my new-found interest, the first group of seniors concentrating in a new major in folklore and mythology has just graduated. One hundred and seventy American colleges and universities offer courses in folklore, and forty-five more are planning to do so. . . .

Publications also reveal the vitality of folklore studies. At Indiana University alone there have been edited or supported in the past five years the *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, the *Folklore and Folk Music Archivist*, *Asian Folklore Studies*, *Indiana Folklore*, and the *Folklore Forum*, the latter a journal issued by graduate students.

Behind all this activity is considerable intellectual ferment. In a recent paper I analyzed contemporary folklore theory according to comparative, functional, historical-reconstructionist, psychoanalytical, structural, oral-formulaic, ideological, hemispheric, folk-cultural, mass-cultural, cross-cultural, and contextual schools. But to describe properly the American folklore scene today would require a book as long as *The British Folklorists.*

RICHARD M. DORSON
Folklore Institute
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana

The South

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

David Donald's unfortunate review of Pat Watters's *The South and the Nation* [Books in Review, July] deserves rebuke and correction. Mr. Watters, with rare perception and sensitivity, has told us how the South came through the crises of the 60's, richly informing his narrative with lessons that both the region and the nation need to learn. Thus, Mr. Donald does a public disservice by recommending, in effect, that this book may safely be ignored.

Obscuring the fact that Watters's subject is the South in the 1960's, Donald devotes the first half of his review to comparisons of W. J. Cash's *The Mind of the South* with *The South and the Nation.* The comparisons all turn out to Watters's considerable disadvantage. According to Donald, Watters—guilty of inadequate research and limited by a narrow geographic perspective—is a "poor, sometimes a slovenly, writer," and his book is "chaotic" in structure. He writes of Negroes in stereotypes and sees them as all alike.

All of these charges are mistaken. Taking literally Watters's statement that he did not bother much with "painstaking scholarly research," Donald missed the irony of the confession and failed to see how securely the book is grounded in the primary materials of the period. As Director of Information of the Southern Regional Council, Watters commissioned, edited, or himself conducted a large share of the very studies to which others turn for their "painstaking scholarly research." Use of the pejoratives "slovenly" and "chaotic" badly misrepresents the character of Watters's style and organization. Watters is not a conventionally "disci-

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What is the average time that it takes a man to gain another erection after he has just had an orgasm?

How does erection actually happen?

What percentage of men suffer from impotence?

What are the three major types of impotence—and how does medical science now deal with each?

What is the Japanese invention that lets even totally impotent men have real intercourse?

How can a man retain his potency, even if he loses his prostate, or his testicles?

THE FEMALE SEX ORGANS—

How can a woman become pregnant without sexual intercourse?

Exactly how do the female genital organs change in preparation for intercourse?

What happens in a woman's body during intercourse? What is the exact trigger-process?

What are the several different varieties of female orgasm? Why do scientists now believe that there is an orgasm central control located in the female body?

How can almost half the women who do not achieve orgasms today *train themselves* to do so?

SEXUAL INTERCOURSE—

Why do other societies use older women to teach younger men the techniques of sexual intercourse, regularly, and as a matter of honored custom?

What is "total sexual stimulation", and how can it be achieved?

What is the best way a woman can encourage a strong erection in a questionably potent man?

How can a couple control the timing of their orgasms, if they want them to be mutual?

APHRODISIACS—

What exactly is Spanish Fly? How does it work? What are its dangers?

What are the different types of plastic surgery done to both male and female sexual organs throughout the world? What effects do they have on successful sexual performance?

What foods have been favored as aphrodisiacs throughout man's history? What is their true effect on sexual performance?

SEXUAL PERVERSION—

Is homosexuality a hormone problem? Can it be cured by hormone injections?

How and where do homosexuals "cruise"? How long is their average encounter with another man? Exactly what do they do?

What is sadistic and masochistic homosexuality, and what do they do?

What do the main terms of homosexual slang mean?

How do European doctors change men into women? What exactly does the operation consist of?

What does a "Peeping Tom" do? And why? Is he dangerous? Are there women Peepers?

What does an exhibitionist do? And why? Do exhibitionists and Peeping Toms ever get together? And then what happens?

MASTURBATION—

How many forms of masturbation are there? What is the difference between child and adult masturbation? Between homosexual and heterosexual masturbation?

Can masturbation be used as a cure for frigidity?

PROSTITUTION—

Exactly what services do customers demand from prostitutes? How do the girls feel about these services?

How does a girl get started as a prostitute?

Precisely how much does the average prostitute make per year?

What is the difference between a street whore and a call girl? What do they do differently?

What one form of intercourse do male prostitutes refuse to perform?

Do prostitutes ever have orgasms?

What is the major service a pimp performs for a prostitute?

How many times in her career does the average prostitute have intercourse?

What happens to a prostitute when she grows old?

BIRTH CONTROL—

What is the exact reliability of coitus interuptis? The rhythm method? Douches? Vaginal suppositories? The pill? Diaphragms?

What popular *soft drink* is actually the most effective douche?

What are the states with the most liberal abortion laws in the country? The countries that allow abortion as a matter of course?

SEX AFTER FORTY—

Why do doctors now say that they can virtually "turn back the clock" for women who are about to enter menopause?

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He is a graduate of the University of Illinois Medical School. A former chief of neuropsychiatry at Walker Air Force Base Hospital, and clinical research associate in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School; he is currently in private psychiatric practice in San Diego, California. He has received praise for *Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Sex* on such national television shows as Johnny Carson . . . David Frost . . . Dick Cavett . . . Art Linkletter . . . and half a dozen more!

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plined" author, and he may suffer losses from the loose, rambling nature of his approach, but his method is the necessary vehicle for the delivery of his special insights, and permits him to make credible the subtleties, ambivalences, and paradoxes of the period. Georgia and Atlanta do figure prominently in the book, but the statement that "rarely does his range of vision extend beyond the state of Georgia" is gross exaggeration. The charge that he "views" all blacks as alike—and as admirable—is contradicted in Donald's own review and does not have enough substance to be labeled an exaggeration.

The last of Donald's criticisms is the strangest. The "larger difficulties" with Watters's work, he writes, "stem not so much from the author as from the subject." It would have been easier to write about "the South and the Nation" in the late 1950's, Donald says, because the themes were simpler. Now, however, with the South so much more like the nation, there is no "fixed vantage point from which to observe" the region. This curious observation, offered to add the final touch of discredit to the effort, substitutes for a clear explanation of the purpose and character of Watters's book.

"What happened in the South," Watters writes, "was that its dominant majority. . .suddenly had the very core of their value system challenged on moral and legal grounds by a spirited and inspired minority, and, finally, overthrown." *The South and the Nation* is surely one of the best accounts of how and why that happened, and with what consequences. To tell that story is its first purpose. But it is more than contemporary regional history. As Watters puts it, "the central experience of the South's recent change, the anguished racial struggle, was an experience that seemed soon likely to consume all Americans." The issue would not be race alone, or even primarily race, for the nation was entering "a time when every old truth must be re-examined, when everything that has been accepted as right and proper must be reassessed." In Watters's pages we see "the wisdom of Southern experience and its warning for the nation as it enters a similar ordeal." And, finally, "to see the South of the 1960's is to see what may happen to the nation or, better, what the nation may avoid."

PAUL M. GASTON
Atlanta, Georgia

DAVID DONALD writes:

I find nothing in Paul M. Gaston's wordy, pretentious letter that causes me to revise my opinion of Pat Watters's wordy, pretentious book.

On Dying in Vain

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I wonder if Norman Podhoretz ["Issues," July] would write about the Holocaust as he does about the Vietnam war. Would he write (while piously recognizing that World War II was wanton or ignoble) that in a few years those six million would all be dead? And would he explain that one implication of this profound statement is that to die in a gas chamber at Auschwitz "is one of the possible ways for mortal beings to die, and not necessarily the worst"? The senseless death and suffering caused by the Vietnam war cannot be sweetened so easily. They are outrages that deserve not his gentle speculations about the ultimate metaphysical purposes of human existence, but rather the most forceful condemnation possible. . . .

LAURA FENSTER
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Mr. Podhoretz implies a justification for the killing and dying in the Civil War because all mortal beings die. But does not this escape into the inevitability of death preclude moral judgments in connection with all killing and under any circumstances? I can imagine the same rationale being used some years hence by a person looking at a monument in Hiroshima or even one marking the horrors at Auschwitz and commenting, "I reckon they all would have been dead and buried by now anyway."

MARY FARQUHARSON
Seattle, Washington

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It was quite an experience to read Mr. Podhoretz's reflections on Memorial Day. . . . To realize that the thoughts he expressed were those of an editor of a magazine which represents Jewish thinking, a magazine which has widespread influence among educated Jews, gave me a profound shock. But when I digested the implication of

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Mr. Podhoretz's remarks, I was sick, for I recognized this editorial as but a symptom of a sickness which has permeated large sections of the people of the United States.

There is much cynicism in the U.S. these days. The latest poll says that 57 per cent of the country is quite favorable toward the President's war policy. But nobody has had the courage, until now, to advance the proposition in any reputable periodical that a generation is expendable. . . .

LILIAN W. MENDELSSOHN
Montreal, Canada

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Podhoretz states that "the end of the Vietnam war is clearly in sight," but until a war ends, it is not over and men will continue to die. To speculate on acceptable ways for a man to die, and on Memorial Day, 1970 to state that "to die young in a war is one of the possible ways for mortal beings to die, and not necessarily the worst," tells of a personal detachment from life and from the soul of man.

PHOEBE SCHULICK
New Rochelle, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . In trying to apply the old woman's observation—"I reckon they would all have been dead and buried by now anyway"—to the 40,000 U.S. dead in Southeast Asia (to say nothing, as Mr. Podhoretz said nothing, of the ten times that number of Vietnamese and Cambodian dead), I am forced to ask again: Did not these recent dead and, for that matter, the Civil War dead also, actually die in vain? Is there that much difference between chattel slavery and economic deprivation plus social ostracism? Are not the blacks, even now, fighting an extension of the Civil War? . . .

As I see it, the question is: Does it really make any difference when an individual dies? This, in turn, means that the balance of a young man's life, from the age of nineteen to the three- or four-score-and-ten years he might be expected to live, has no special value or importance. If that be so, then what value can be ascribed to the first nineteen years of the preparation? Preparation for what? For the glorious death (presumably) of the sacrificial goat? For a Vietnam war to hold back Communism while promoting fascism? . . .

STELLA FALK
Montreal, Canada

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As another Southerner "mildly obsessed with the Civil War," I would like to take issue with Norman Podhoretz. . . . The observation of Willie Morris's grandmother on the question of whether those buried at Vicksburg had died in vain—"I reckon they all would have been dead and buried by now anyway"—is quite perceptive for an old woman who must be in her nineties, but for a serious intellectual to regard her remark as a profound answer is absurd. Mr. Podhoretz's conclusion that they, and the Vietnam dead as well, did not die in vain . . . could apply as well to victims of auto accidents or infanticide.

To conclude, as Mr. Podhoretz does, that the war dead did not die in vain because sooner or later they would have died anyway is to rule out the possibility that any war deaths ever have been, or ever could be, in vain, and thus to render the question meaningless. But in fact the question is far from meaningless, as Lincoln recognized at Gettysburg when he urged his audience to join him in resolving ". . . that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation . . . shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." For Lincoln, clearly, if there were no new birth of freedom, or at least if the government perished from the earth, those dead would have died in vain.

Thus, in order to determine whether or not men died in vain one must analyze the reasons for and results of their deaths. One can readily understand why most people are reluctant to do this, to measure our (not to mention the Vietnamese) sacrifices in Vietnam against the results; it would be nearly unbearable to admit that loved ones killed and died for no good reason. But for an intellectual to avoid this painful analysis is inexcusable.

JOHN S. ROSENBERG
Palo Alto, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Last winter I had occasion to visit the old concentration camps. It was cold; it had snowed a little; the buildings, the barbed wire, the great ovens were rendered a little timeless and romantic-looking by a cover of ice diadems and hoarfrost. So peaceful did it look that I fell into a philosophical mood and began to speculate on man, politics, the vast journey through space, the shortness of life and as to whether or not there was some purpose and design to living. And, as I looked on those silent buildings which had seen so much tragedy as millions passed through, somehow the brute irrationality, what we used to call pure evil, seemed diminished by the passage of time. I thought of man's long climb to civilization, of Tamerlane's mound of skulls and the salted earth over ravished Carthage and ten thousand blinded Bulgars and the killed-off Indians and the labor camps of Russia and the thousands whose moldering bodies fertilized the soil after the Thirty Years' War. And what if, after all, those six million had not died in vain? What if, after all, their deaths served some greater goal, some divine purpose?

Puzzling about this, feeling too young to understand, I left along a solitary road that wound through the Polish plain and happened there to pass an old *Zayde,* sitting there and selling souvenirs of the Death Camps. He was almost blind but the hard crystalline shell over his eyeballs caught the wintry light and cast it back reamplified so that it glistened brightly with folk-wisdom. I stopped by his side and said, *"Zayde, zog mir dem emes.* Do you think there was some greater purpose to the deaths of those six million?"

He turned his face toward me and appeared to stare at me for a long time. "You buying or you *handling*?"

I picked up a wallet made of human skin. It was finely wrought with intricate designs, but of graven images on it there were none.

We said nothing to one another for a long time. How wise was that time-graven face. "*Nu*?" I said.

He said nothing but hummed softly to himself an old folk song whose words I remembered from my youth. "I'm not in a hurry, I got plenty of time. . . ."

I gave him some money.

"In 1943 I said to myself, alright already, it's coming to an end soon. And it came to an end, didn't it?"

I nodded.

"Look at it this way," he quavered, "In another fifty years they will already have been dead anyway, right?"

I had never thought about it that way.

"So it isn't the worse way you could die? Right?"

I nodded.

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"And if Man gets something out of it, it isn't for nothing, right?"

"So?"

"So because of those six million we got them by the *baitzim,*" he roared. Then he pocketed the change and resumed his humming.

What a revelation! How wise! And I walked the road back from Belsen feeling lighter and more reconciled.

SOL YURICK

New York City

NORMAN PODHORETZ writes:

My intention was neither to "sweeten" nor to "justify" the death and suffering caused by the Vietnam war; nor was I advancing the proposition that "a generation is expendable." I was raising what I called the "hideous question" of whether the Americans who have died in this war and those who are yet to die will some day be thought to have died in vain, and I raised it, as I indicated clearly enough both in the title ("First Things, and Last") and in the body of the piece, not in a political but in a religious context and without attempting to provide an answer. Although I was not trying to be "profound," or even claiming profundity for the old woman's remark (I characterized it, choosing my words carefully, as "astonishing," not as "profound"), I *was* trying to give expression to a greater complexity of feeling and attitude than is acceptable to the kind of mentality which perceives no distinction between a concentration camp and a war or between slavery and economic hardship or between an auto accident and combat. Wherever this mentality prevails (and Mr. Yurick's letter is a particularly rank specimen), such "gentle speculations about the ultimate metaphysical purposes of human existence" as I had the bad taste to engage in are naturally considered a mark of "cynicism" or the "symptom of a sickness" or the exposure of a "personal detachment from life and from the soul of man," or even as an "inexcusable flight" from the "painful" duties of the intellectual. Well, we have seen this species of bullying spiritual philistinism at work before, and its confident reemergence may yet come to be thought one of the sorrier domestic consequences of the disastrous American intervention in Vietnam.

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Laws, Kings, and Cures

Norman Podhoretz

READING Nathan Glazer's account (p. 74) of his transformation from a "mild radical" into a correspondingly mild conservative has set me to wondering about the not dissimilar course my own political development has taken since the early 60's. As Mr. Glazer himself indicates, I was one of the people who participated rather actively in the movement of those days to revive the dormant spirit of radical social criticism within the American intellectual community, both through my own writing and through the kind of writing which, as the newly appointed editor of COMMENTARY, I was able to encourage others to do. Yet by the end of the decade I found myself almost entirely out of sympathy with the political workings of the radical ethos, and for many of the same reasons that Glazer gives in his article, especially the barbaric hostility to freedom of thought which by the late 60's had become one of the hallmarks of this ethos. But in the case of my own disaffection with the radicalism of the late 60's, there was an element going beyond what is customarily considered political—just, indeed, as there had been in the exhilaration with which I and many others adopted the radical perspective ten years earlier.

BY NOW the 1950's are almost universally regarded as a time of complacency in American life, but that is not at all how the period saw itself. In its own eyes it was an "age of anxiety," burdened with a cheerless view of the human predicament and a constricted sense of human possibility. Most educated people in the 50's, moreover, held to the conviction, and no less fervently than their counterparts of the 60's, that the modern world was in the throes of a major historical crisis. The difference was that very few people, educated or otherwise, saw any significant connection between the contemporary crisis and the political or social institutions under which they were living in America. Rather than expressing an uncritical admiration of those institutions, however, this failure to see a connection testified to their belief that the crisis cut much deeper than political action could conceivably reach. It was thought to cut, in fact, to the very foundations of Western civilization, to the particular bargain with nature out of which that civilization, with all its hideous "discontents," had originally grown.

This, in any event, is what such representative works of the late 50's as Norman O. Brown's *Life Against Death*, Norman Mailer's *The Deer Park*, and Saul Bellow's *Seize the Day* all appeared to be saying, each in its own way; and none envisaged a political solution, not even, really, a revolutionary one. It was not until Paul Goodman's *Growing Up Absurd* appeared that a plausible connection was established for many of us between the contemporary sense of crisis and the institutional structure of modern society; and it was only with the establishment of that connection that a belief in the capacity of political action to address itself effectively to the crisis became possible. If, in the world of affairs, the 60's began with the sit-ins in the South and various other stirrings of the activist spirit, in the world of ideas the new decade began with the rebirth of faith in the efficacy of activism, not merely to fight evils of indisputably political origin like legally enforced racial segregation but to do something also about the spiritual malaise of the age.

THE salient difference between the 50's and the 60's, then, is not to be found in facile and tendentiously invidious contrasts between "complacency" and "concern" or between "conformism" and "dissent" or between "cynicism" and "idealism": it can most accurately be located in the differing degrees of hope the two periods placed in the power of politics to bring relief to the ills of man's estate. The prevailing view in the 50's was that politics could do very little beyond what the New Deal had already accomplished; with the revival of the immensely heady idea that politics could do infinitely more than that the 50's came to an end and the 60's began.

By the time the 60's in their turn had come to an end, many of us had lived with that heady idea long enough to learn something about the havoc it was capable of wreaking—a damage greater in some respects than that which had flown from the overly constrained imagination of political possibility encouraged by the spirit of the 50's. If the characteristic danger of the political skepticism of the 50's was the ease with which it could slide from the view that politics can do very little into the view that it can do nothing at all, the characteristic danger of the activist faith of the 60's was its irresistible expansionism.

"How small of all that human hearts endure/That part which laws or kings can cause or cure," said Dr. Johnson. The story of the 60's is in considerable mea-

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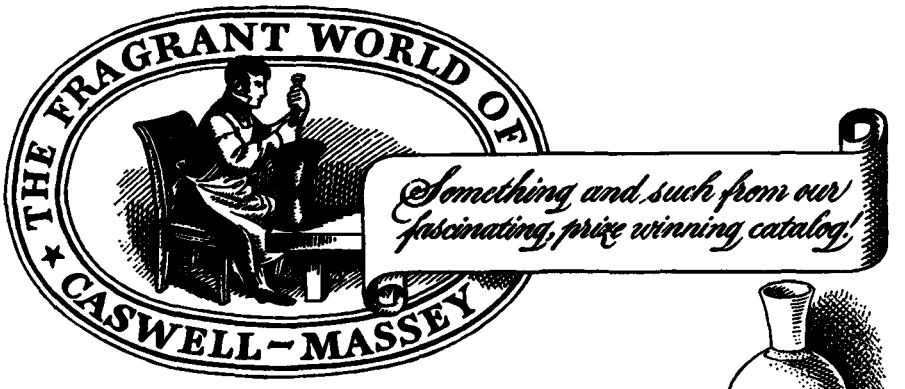
sure the story of how "that part" of the ills of the human (or at any rate the American) condition which were thought to have been caused by laws or kings and might therefore be cured by them, grew to embrace virtually everything, up to and including even the very curses that accompanied the expulsion from Eden. As the activist faith spread, so too did the disposition to blame every conceivable trouble on "the society" and to demand remedial action by the state, whether or not the trouble actually was social in its causes and whether or not the state actually possessed either the wisdom or the power to heal and to cure. When the state responded and the trouble remained, or when the state, not knowing what to do, did not respond at all, the sense of oppression deepened, giving greater and greater impetus to a suicidal drive toward the violent destruction of "the system."

In 1960, some of us suspected that far too much of what seemed wrong with life in America had been blandly ascribed to the unalterable nature of life itself; our radicalization consisted in the determination to find out how much of all this pain could demonstrably be traced to a particular system of economic organization and a particular set of political arrangements and was in consequence truly susceptible of amelioration through political struggle. In 1970 some of us who came a decade earlier to radicalism via the route of ideas rather than the route of personal grievance are convinced that it has become more important to insist once again on the freedom of large areas of human experience from the power of politics, whether benevolent or malign, than to acquiesce in the surly tyranny of the activist temper in its presently dominant forms. It is in this sense that we consider ourselves deradicalized, and not out of any sudden lapse into indifference over the remediable ills which afflict the world and to whose removal the spirit of radical activism has come to stand, for all practical purposes, in a stubborn and perverse and most intractable opposition.



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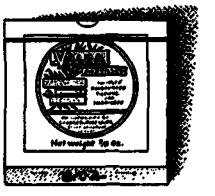

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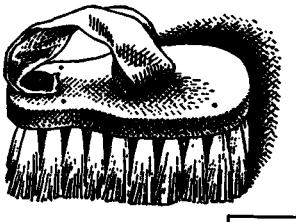

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The Liberated Woman

Midge Decter

THOUGH SHE WAS BORN into a very real world, and not a princess, it might be only a little fanciful to imagine that her birth was attended by a visitation of good fairies. Of these, one wished upon her kindly and indulgent parents. One, good health. One wished that she be surrounded by wealth sufficient to provide her with comfortable shelter, rich foods, costly adornments and entertainments, and a protracted time of growth free from the foreclosures of necessity. One wished that her mind not be restricted to the disciplines and techniques of everyday survival; another, that her imagination not be locked away from the gorgeous variety of recorded human experience; still another, that no hint of talent on her part, no childish display of capacity or inclination, be left to wither from neglect. And last but not least, there was one to wish that she be comely, perhaps even beautiful, so that she might know herself beyond doubt to be desired. If in this visitation was included no benign spirit expressly to wish upon her a sweet and sunny nature, certainly among all the others the conditions for such a nature had been fully anticipated.

This truly blessed event took place, let us say, just at the close of World War II. Those first years of postwar adjustment—her father a student or resuming the long-interrupted practice of his profession, her mother in a fever of taking hold of an orderly domestic existence—were spent by her in the material unconsciousness of infancy. By the time society intruded upon her self-centered world, when she entered school, she was safely settled within a community of the economically secure. She was to want for no necessity and to be denied very little, actually, in the way of luxury—and of this latter such denials as she would suffer would be grounded not in the idea of superfluity but in the definition of her own best welfare. Of fundamental luxuries—learned doctors to straighten her teeth or ease her melancholy, instructors of all sorts to enlarge her accomplishment and enrich her leisure, travels, holidays spent at seaside or lakeside or mountain, and, above all, the best and most attractive schooling available—of these the limit would be set only at her own need and capacity. Moreover, nothing in the surrounding atmosphere would even offer the suggestion that such privilege was hers by any but divine right.

For in addition to being economically secure, the community in which she was to grow up had organized itself around one central principle: namely, what would be most pleasing and in the broadest sense of the term most beneficial to her. Unlike that of most of the world's children, past or present, her existence was not a thing taken for granted and hence left to piece itself in somehow with the general flow of life. From the moment of her conception, she had become the precise and elaborately defined responsibility of both her parents and of the society they were making. The house in which she lived would be architected to the centrality of her presence in it. The schools she attended would come under the sway of the idea that she must not be made to suffer in any way, physically, emotionally, mentally; that undue discomfort or anxiety would impede her fulfillment as both individual and pupil and thus constitute pedagogical failure. And perhaps most important, the mores of that community were adjusted to free her as much as possible from the sense of guilt that had been found so crippling by its adults. As a little child, she was not to be compelled to be clean or orderly or even formally well-mannered beyond some minimal point of tolerability to those around her. She was to be allowed as much expression—certainly, in particular, verbal expression—of her aggressions as could be consonant with domestic survival. Finally, when the time came for it, she was not to be denied her proper and expected and healthy experience of sex. The notion of what was proper or expected in sex might have been left somewhat vaguely defined, but at the very least included the idea that she must not, even if considerations of prudence had still to deter her, be made to feel *guilty* about it. For guilt was the mother of frigidity, and frigidity was the leading society-created crime against her humanity.

She, on her part, responded to these new expectations of home and community by appearing to fulfill most of them. That is to say, she tended

MIDGE DECTER, *whose essays appear frequently in* COMMENTARY and other periodicals, is executive editor of *Harper's* magazine. In private life, Miss Decter is married and is the mother of four children.

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to be somewhat disorderly and unmannerly but not intolerably so—compensating those around her for the chaos she created with a certain charm and generosity of spirit that might otherwise have been lacking. She was sometimes given to seizures of aggression that, once again, seemed compensated for by the intimacy and demonstrativeness that were their obverse. She went through school without any marked display of suffering and gave much evidence of the qualities deemed by everyone to be independence of mind and creativity. She was, in fact, to be accounted an educational success, having mastered her schoolwork easily, with time and spirit left over for the cultivation of special interests—which happened to be, in her case, literary; and in due course she and her school were repaid for their collaboration by her admittance to a prestigious Eastern college.

With her parents in particular, whatever difficulties she made were precisely the difficulties predicted, and so discounted in advance, by their ideology of parenthood. Thus while she often gave them great pain, particularly during her adolescence, in the very act of doing so she was also serving to vindicate them. If she showed them a certain disrespect, beneath that disrespect were felt to lie the kind of person-to-person relations made possible by their very refusal to take adult advantage. Hers, therefore, could never be the contempt in which they had once held their own parents, so basic, so full of plain snobbery, that it dared not be given casual utterance. If she tended, though of course accepting without scruple, to value at naught many of the comforts they had so mindfully provided her, this was no more than a tribute to the higher sensitivity such a life as hers had permitted to develop. If she tended to use her own still-unformed responses as the measure by which all things in the world were to be judged—instead of, as had generally been the case in her parents' generation, the other way around—this again was the result of an enviable refusal on her part to be spiritually bullied. Hers would never be that docility in the face of accepted piety which had once so damped and narrowed their own youths and which they had vowed not to impose on her. And if she seemed, despite all tendencies to disrespect and self-regard somewhat overdependent on them—demanding their support in all her undertakings, their assent to all her decisions—this was seen to be the mark of an earned and merited faith in their devotion to her. So no matter what she did, the one thing she could not successfully do was storm the fortress of their anxious resignation to her will.

THE YEARS of her adolescence, then, were spent pretty much in accordance with the times—being in this case the late 50's and early 60's—and her specially privileged estate. She enjoyed, for one thing, virtually unprecedented mobility for someone of her age. By the time of her graduation from college, she had owned a car in which she and friends had traveled twice across the United States and to Mexico; she had spent one year at school in, and two summers touring, Europe; she had spent several holidays with her family at an ocean resort, several others at camp or on bicycle trips, and served one stint as an *au pair* girl on an island in the Caribbean.

She also changed her style of presenting herself, which is to say her wardrobe, with regular frequency: always in the name of a new freedom from convention, always expensively, and always in accordance with the new social message it was required to bring. Sometimes that message was, I am a naughty and rather rowdy child; sometimes, I am a sexless sprite. She was never quite conscious of what any given wardrobe signified, but of the possibility for adopting new personae and playing with each of them to a quickly reached point of boredom she was never for one moment unconscious.

Being pretty and bright and usually high-spirited, she was a welcome presence among her peers. Boy friends were never wanting, but these she took, after the going fashion, one at a time and on the basis of a steady, if temporary, commitment. Each of them in turn was understood by friends and family to be her momentary property, he was invited into her home as she was into his, and when she wished to, she was permitted by adults to speak in their presence of "love." This arrangement allowed her to exchange varying degrees of sexual bestowal for a large measure of personal security.

Somewhere in this process, say her senior year in high school or freshman year in college, the bestowal demanded of her was the final one: she entered into a full-blown affair. For this she was equipped by her family doctor with a diaphragm —later she would be given the Pill. She never discussed the exact nature of this affair with her parents, as some of her friends had done with theirs, but by their behavior they let her know that as long as she stayed out of trouble the terms of her sex life were naturally and rightly to be left to her own desires. They did not scruple to leave her at home alone if for any reason they were called away for a few days. Nor did they refuse her permission to travel off for a weekend on her own recognizance. With her girl friends she discussed her sexual affairs in great detail—likely as not emotional rather than erotic detail. They judged her, as she judged them, merely to be engaged in the inevitable and taken for granted.

With her lover (s) there was also a good deal of discussion, also not erotic but emotional (sometimes psychoanalytic) in focus. Suffering no sense of sin within themselves and no undue pressure from the outside, they were not particularly venturesome, neither in their acts of love nor in the conditions under which these acts were carried

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out. The whetting edge of danger for them, if and when it should be sought, was promised far more by the explorations and exposures of their minds under the influence of illegal chemical preparations. Out of bed, they became deeply dependent on one another for companionship. Any social activity sought by one which excluded the other was taken to be an intentional act of disloyalty. Between them they exchanged words of love but more often, and with more sincerity, competed for the right to expatiate on their respective "hang-ups," fears, or new triumphs of emotional growth. He tended to flatter her for her powers of understanding, or sometimes to revile her for her lack of them; and she tended, in the sense of power afforded by the secret, erotic knowledge of his unequal need for her, to baby him.

And out there in the daylight world were friends, parties, diversions both frivolous and serious, and all overlaid with promising and highly valued achievements. In short, a full and interesting life.

College, though it presented her at first with the shock of needing to establish herself as a uniquely identifiable person among strangers, was largely a continuation of what had gone before. To be sure, she had now to work harder at her studies and to manage relations with her peers and those in authority without the softening mediations of the familiar. Once the techniques for these were mastered, however, the charm, the openness to intimacy, the need for support, began to work their accustomed effect. Her school was a girls' school, traditionally famous for harboring creativity and for being the sexual preserve of certain neighboring men's colleges. Her classes, free of everyday male competition, were precisely on that account conducted in an easy spirit of flirtation between professor and student and vice versa. Self-expression was the highest demand of these classes, and constituted their definition of attainment. "The thing I really feel about Emma Bovary is . . ."; "But I can't understand how Shakespeare, feeling as he obviously did about Cordelia, could have made her . . ."; "If, as you say, society and culture are not the same thing, how is someone like me to understand. . . ." In this atmosphere, no challenge of hers went unanswered, and no answer of her own was dismissed. She felt herself as each academic year went by to possess an ever greater grasp of the central ideas of her time and an ever keener sense of how to dispose of the errors and trivia of the past.

By the time of graduation, she knew one thing for certain about her future—whether it immediately held marriage, a career, or some pleasant temporizing on the way to either or both, it was going to take place somewhere at the center of "the action." Her decision, naturally, had not come to such clarity solely or even mainly as a response to her studies. Certainly she had always had, though of late unadmitted, fantasies of chic; but all this provided no specific focus to her determination and by itself would only have sent her off passively down the track to meet whatever opportunity happened to come along first. Meanwhile, however, both on the campus and all around it, as far as her selective eye could see, she had found herself living in a turbulent and exciting—an *important*—world. First, of course, there had been the civil-rights movement, followed by the eerie titillations of black nationalist hostility. Then the war. Then the universities themselves, in their interesting new guise as the enemies and oppressors of people like her. She took no central part in these movements, preferring to remain a sympathizer, occasional demonstrator, but enthusiastic adopter of each new persona, replete with wardrobe, they engendered. Once again, her talent for personal demand made palatable by the affectionate gentleness with which she pressed it, gave her easy entrée to the brotherhood she sought. It was this new persona, as vague but unmistakably virtuous radical, clad with the appropriately artful shabbiness, that was taking her straight to the heart of the big-city center of communications.

Beyond her education, academic and political, college had meant for her the distillation of a way of life. This way of life, too, had been shaped by a movement, but a movement too amorphous to identify and one its adherents didn't join so much as were overtaken by. At one extreme end, the movement was called Hippiedom and outspokenly advocated a life of quietistic bohemianism, a floating on the outer tides of a society too overpowering and too rigorous for the truly sensitive to manage. At the other extreme, it was a kind of training ground for the Jet Set, whose disciplines were created to promote the hard and unremitting pursuit of monied leisure. She and her friends located themselves somewhere in between, taking up the attitudes and behavior patterns of both of these extremes in some kind of mix that felt convenient to them. Those aspects of life they found unduly thorny or uncongenial they characterized with the adjective "Establishment." "Establishment" could mean, in a leaning toward the hippie side, too rational and clear-cut, and it could mean, from the other side, simply too grubby. That massive though conspiratorial group from whose designation they derived their adjective—in addition to its broader responsibilities for the oppression of Negroes and the making of imperialist wars—was also, it seemed, concerned to see that they endure great boredom in the culture they were making for themselves. Thus their major forms of recreation, their music, their movies, their mystical readings and devotions, their pot-and-wine parties, constituted not only pleasure in themselves but the striking of a blow

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in behalf of a healthier society. Virtually nothing they did, and most particularly nothing they did with respect to sex, was devoid of this larger dimension.

Our heroine was never actually promiscuous as the learned doctors of the soul would have understood the word. That is to say, she had several affairs but continued, as before, to have them one at a time, each bearing, if briefly, the constraints of monogamy. Twice in her senior year she had spent afternoons in a motel with one of her youngest and most erotically inspiring professors. The actual experience was so alien to the fantasy that had overtaken her listening to the professor's lecture, however, that she found some delicate way of being unable to see him more than twice. Her secret sense of triumph in the classroom after that was not quite overborne by her disappointment. Once, for a weekend, she had submitted to the lesbian advances of a dormmate. Something in the power of that experience both to repel her and overwhelm her with longings for self-destruction spoke to her imagination of the decisively ruinous role of sex she'd read about in early works of pornography.

For the most part, though, she couldn't really understand what all the fuss was about. Either, as her culture told her and as she and her friends repeated ritualistically to one another, the lack of weight with which sexual activity floated among the other activities of her life was a sign that it had been put in its proper and natural place. Or, as in her secret heart she believed, there was something in the experience for others that she had been unable to attain to. The one lover who piqued her appetites—though, possibly by definition, he was the one who made the least observable effort to satisfy them—was a young lawyer she encountered her first year out of college. He talked very little except about matters relating to the progress of his career; until one night at dinner he quite unaccountably began to revile her—characterizing her in certain forceful four-letter terms she had often heard used and had often used herself but never in connection with her—then left the table and walked out; nor did he call her to apologize. After a few days she pronounced him dull and boorish and came upon the insight that it had been precisely his unworthiness which had made him so attractive to her in the first place. She vowed she would never be so sick as to be publicly humiliated again, and she never was.

THE DEPLORABLE experience with the lawyer had in fact been her first sexual encounter in New York City, where she had come, on being graduated from school, to seek her fortune. He was followed by a television documentary producer of some small but rather well-paid renown, a gentle and helpful but often gloomy man who had only recently separated from his wife and two young children. She and the producer took an apartment together, an arrangement which was to last less than a year and to end in considerable bitterness (among the causes of which was her first and only, and quite disagreeable, abortion) but in the meantime was to provide them both with exciting times. She exaggerated, by depending on, his strength and wordly wisdom, and he helped by scolding her a lot to assure her of her talent.

She came to the city with a job already in hand. In her senior year she had been first winner in an essay contest sponsored by one of the fashion magazines—subject: "Is Sex Freer on the Campus, and Why?"—and her prize was a junior position on the magazine's staff. Once in the office, she felt she had been a naif to be pleased by the prospect before her. For one thing, the magazine was staffed mainly by women who were, or were becoming, technical experts in one or another of the phases of fashion-and-food presentation the publication specialized in. Mainly it was just not her kind of place and had nothing to teach her. Under the goading of, and enabled by the support of, her lover, she quit her job and began to write. Through his contacts she acquired an agent; and by the time they split up she had published two short pieces of film criticism and a feature piece about the audience of the New York Film Festival in a new, expensively produced magazine devoted to youth arts. Soon after this she became a more or less regular contributor of pieces of special reporting to an influential neighborhood weekly.

She made very little money, but managed with it somehow. Her parents gave her furniture for her one-room studio apartment and sent her checks—not at exactly regular intervals like an allowance but regularly enough so that she could count on them and never needed to think of asking. In addition, her parents tried manfully to suppress all expression of the anxiety that mingled, particularly after they learned of her arrangement with the documentary producer, in their pride and pleasure with her. And at certain of the parties she attended, there were bound to be one or two strangers who recognized her name.

Several of her former classmates had also come to New York to live and work. They were all still close enough to their school days to find social ease together. A couple of these were secretaries or editorial assistants somewhere in the publishing industry; one worked in television, in what capacity she could or would never make clear; one taught school; one worked in the poverty program and lived communally with a couple of painters, a jewelry designer, a dancer, and a ragged young couple with no visible occupation other than the preparation of various interesting potations consumed daily by the entire household. Sometimes these girls would be visited for a weekend, over a holiday, or on the occasion of some

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especially important demonstration by a group of the young men they had known in the neighboring colleges and who had remained on in graduate school to avoid the draft. In accordance with the established custom in these matters, their guests would be farmed out among them to spend the night, in sleeping bags on their floors or, if need be, in their beds—but not, as the rule had also been set down, there so casually to enjoy their favors.

She was always happy to see them, these boys (as she now took to calling them in her mind). But sometimes deep into the night, perhaps awakened by a certain discomfort in the sleeping arrangement, she could not evade the thought that were it not for the fury roused in her by society's wish to have them kill or be killed, they wouldn't be so very interesting to her any more. They seemed so beclouded, so lacking in the sharp personal edge of definition, so . . . interchangeable. She feared she might not remember which of them she had once slept with and which merely exchanged deep confidences with. The curious thing she found was that one of these visits, should it occur while she was in the middle of an assignment, seriously disrupted her ability to work. Of all her group of college acquaintances, she was thus far the most successful. She supposed she felt guilty about that, or at least inhibited about pulling rank. But her friends, particularly her male friends, made no trouble on that score. They were loyal, they praised the things she'd written, they suggested all sorts of hot, cool, or necessary subjects she ought to try her hand at next. They regarded her in fact as a sort of public-relations arm for their own particular concerns and causes.

Then—at some point in all this—came the most hopeful love affair of all. She guessed, though she didn't want to push things, that this affair would be the final one. How her feelings of attachment to this lover differed from those in the past she would not have been able to say exactly. The two of them just—got on better. Their life together seemed grown-up and real. No man had been as sensitive to, or shown as much respect for, her feelings. No man had expressed such vulnerability to her erotic power. No man, in short, had been so genuinely accepting of her. She felt free to be herself as she had felt with no one except her parents, and enthusiastically set up house with him. He, being a much-employed news and fashion photographer, was away from home a good deal. She found his absences quite painful and his homecomings eventful. About her work he was patient, sympathetic, and totally permissive. He neither goaded nor inhibited her. If she wanted to be a writer, fine. If she wanted to relax and just be his girl, that was fine, too. For the first time she bought a cookbook and began to think about planning a meal now and then. He never demanded that, either, being quite heedless, though always appreciative, of what he ate. He did make an absolute point of having certain of his comforts but on the other hand insisted that she have hers as well. He insisted, too, on making love a good deal more often than she was accustomed to, but his demands were always expressed in terms of her irresistibility to him and thus became themselves irresistible.

If the foregoing does not describe a situation to which might be applied the traditional fairy-tale ending, surely it would be fair to say that the beneficent fairies who attended her birth had not till then deserted her. She did receive the tender nurture they had wished upon her. She did enjoy the freedom of mind and spirit, and at least a sufficient part of the wealth, they had invoked. She did always have reason to know herself desirable. They did manage to bring her without undue pain to the opportunity to develop her talent, and, finally, even into the arms of, if not Prince Charming, then at least the kind of man her great-grandmother might have mistaken for him.

The story does not end here, however. For where was that last ethereal spirit to bless her with contentment?

II

She could not have said exactly when she first became aware of Women's Liberation. As it does for most people with most movements, her consciousness of the new feminism developed and sharpened over time, following an accumulation of news items, incidents, conversations. Oddly enough, it was one of her old male college friends who supplied her with the first word of it to which she had a truly personal response. This took place over a dinner she had cooked for him—none too graciously in fact, for he had not even bothered to tell her he was coming and she was afraid he would also expect to be put up for the night (a custom in whose innocence her lover absolutely refused to believe). As it happened, he was going uptown to stay with some Columbia friends, still engaged in assessing the victories of their "insurrection" of the previous spring and now planning their strategy for the coming school year. Thus Columbia was much on his mind and in the course of discussing it he mentioned in passing, for her amusement, the doings of some of the female radicals in an occupied building. The girls had deeply resented the expectation of their male co-revolutionists that they would fulfill such traditional feminine roles as that of providing food and doing the typewriting. They had posted a sign in a corridor of one of the occupied buildings which said something to the effect of: This is a liberated area; therefore do not make sandwiches or type unless these happen to be ways in which you genuinely fulfill yourselves. She joined with him, laughing and shaking her head, in the moment's

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insinuation of their common superiority, and then felt a sudden, overwhelming wash of resentment herself—at what she did not know, except that the dinner she had just cooked somehow came into it as well. To be sure, she did feel superior to those girls, or, rather, ashamed of them: with the war in Vietnam, the oppression of blacks, the general decay of American society to feel passionately about, how could they justify trying to get into the act as women? Yet why did she, if she were the fully developed individual she claimed to be, feel even so much of kinship with the female liberators as to experience her disapproval of them as shame? And why did she, who had never in her life but of her own free will either put together a sandwich or touched her fingers to a typewriter, recognize that she could empathize completely with their feelings?

Soon after, she had lunch with an editor in a publishing house who was showing some mild interest in her career. The editor was a woman, with a high-ranking position in the company's trade department, a husband who was a very rich and successful doctor, and two growing children. Less than halfway through lunch the pretense of an editorial conference was abandoned and her hostess launched into an eloquent discourse on the position of women, which was partly a pitch for some books she was bringing out on the subject and partly a lamentation for the conditions of her own life, particularly her working life.

Our heroine was both taken aback and intrigued: the grievance of a woman like her own mother she could understand—a painter who had been unable to hang in and offer the proper devotion to her art, and whose overtime concern for the development of her daughter left her now beached and flopping around to fill up her days—but this woman? She would have supposed her to have reached the best of all reasonable settlements: a highly successful career of her own, a successful husband, children. . . . When she expressed these sentiments to her lunch companion, the tirade only intensified. Her husband, she said, for one thing had always believed her incompetent to share his professional concerns and for another thing did not altogether take her work seriously either, believing hers to be the major responsibility for the upbringing of the children and any time left over from that was for her to do with as she pleased. And as for her work itself, while it was true she was a senior editor, she was paid a smaller salary than many of her male colleagues on the ground that since she was already well taken care of money was not the issue, and—what particularly irritated her—she was never allowed to forget she was a woman. Just that very morning she had received a memo from the editor-in-chief asking for the "feminine point of view" on some manuscript or other. She was outraged as well for the younger girls who worked in her office, all of whom were far overqualified, by virtue of education and accomplishment, for the kind of ordinary routine work they were required to do. "And what about you?" she turned suddenly on our heroine. "Aren't you a 'girl' writer? Do you think if you were a young man they'd send you on the kind of assignments they do—always the 'personal side' of things? And pay you so little? Do you think, if the world had taught you truly to take yourself seriously as a writer, you would have the kind of trouble getting down to things, or completing assignments, that you described to me earlier?"

THE AGITATION that resulted from this lunch ebbed and flowed in successive waves for nearly a week. She looked at the apartment she and her lover had set up and felt that it was not a writer's apartment at all. The smallest alcove in it, hidden from view by a bentwood screen, was the place where she had set up her writing table; her portable typewriter was kept in its case under the bed. The place was gradually filling up with domestic objects that required her attention, dusting or keeping up of some kind. She found by the end of that week that she had not once made the bed and that she was days overdue in getting her lover's shirts to the laundry. Finally one evening in the process of clearing away the supper dishes, she looked down at herself and at her lover stretched out on the couch engrossed in a televised baseball game, and startled them both by simply letting the tray full of dishes crash from her hands to the floor and slamming out the door to the movies.

The *coup de grâce* was delivered by her old school friend who worked for CBS. "I am into Women's Lib," she announced. "It's really straightened out my head. I want you to come to one of our meetings and do a story about it." The "meeting" turned out to be a gathering of about fifteen young women in someone's apartment. She and her friend arrived late, so whether or not it had had some ostensible purpose or agenda she never discovered. By the time of their arrival, the group was well into the heat of a kind of group-therapy session, with each girl in turn bearing witness, as it were, to the outrage done her person as a woman. They talked mostly of sex. One denounced men in the street for assuming that because she wore a miniskirt she was a proper object for their humiliating leers. Another said she finally understood that all this talk about the sexual revolution and new sexual freedom was just men's propaganda to rob girls of an excuse for not going to bed with them. A third confessed, after a certain amount of verbal fidgeting, that she had never had an orgasm. She received a standing ovation. One or two spoke of their hatred for a family system that turned women into "walking wombs" and said they refused to be society's "breeders." All in all, the talk centered

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largely on the issue of the sanctity of the speakers' persons and bodies and of a great variety of violations being perpetrated thereon. Our girl reporter noted that a number of the women in the room were not wearing brassieres, with the effect of making them look either younger or older.

She herself did not take part in the discussion but knew from the excitement pounding in her breast, an excitement rising to and echoing every word being spoken, that she would not, not yet, be able to write about it either. These girls were ten times more extreme than the lady editor had been. They also seemed, anyway the most articulate of them, to have some theory linking their problems to the evils of capitalist society; this, she had to confess, largely bored her. She had in her time demonstrated with the best of them against the triple evils of war, racism, and poverty that her contemporaries had discovered to be running rampant over the United States today, but she did not take the prospect of revolution seriously and real Marxists had seemed to her like members of a faith she was willing to tolerate but whose theology left her cold.

But never had she considered social evil as something being done to *her*—which accounted for her reaction to the story of the Columbia girls. She supposed that the kinds of emotion now coursing through her, as yet somewhat inchoate but with their main component a certain sweet bitterness, were the same kinds of emotion as are felt by blacks. She had never liked girls, or the company of girls, that much; though naturally, particularly at her age and in her circumstance, she had several close friends among them. Now she understood that liking or not liking them was beside the point, a smoke screen created by the illusion that she had many more free choices than in fact she had. They were her community. In their new responsibility to themselves as women, and to one another as women, they were being responsible to her as well.

She began to read the movement's documents. Each of them made her feel angry and made her feel good in that peculiar combination she was learning to take for granted. They told her that, like blacks, women were an oppressed class; that more than blacks, they had been oppressed throughout history. But what of the rights they had already won—to vote, to own property, to pursue careers, to move about, to have sexual experience before marriage, to have pleasure in such experience, to plan and control the having of babies? These were bogus, the literature replied. Voting, owning property, getting educated, going to work were all a sham that existed as theoretical opportunity only without true cultural sanction. What did it mean to vote or go to school or go to work for a living if the main assumption of the culture in which these activities took place, and which was shaping the actors themselves, was that they were creatures set apart, with special capacities and incapacities and with their own special roles to play? What did it mean, for instance, that no one would frown on a girl's becoming a doctor if all her life the world had told her, in attitude and word, that this was an un-girl-like thing to do? Naturally she would—as she measurably did—show a lack of interest in the necessary scientific discipline. She had from the cradle been wrapped in pink, dressed in frills, encouraged to play with dolls, to read novels, to long for motherhood.

On the subject of sex, these documents, like the women at the meeting she'd attended, were both outspoken and livid. Women were objects. Their so-called new sexual freedom was only the freedom to have sex, not *not* to have it. Thus the pursuit of this freedom placed them even more squarely under the thumb of male power. And the notion of *pleasure* in sex—this was, several articles went so far as to say, nothing less than an outright male conspiracy. For the very definition of a woman's pleasure now in currency—the attainment of orgasm by means of an act of sexual intercourse—was such as to equate it only with a man's pleasure. In sending women out after sexual equality, men had sought to make them even more dependent than before on the male's capacity to provide. Women without intercourse-induced orgasms had now to deem themselves sexually inadequate, failures. And being no longer required simply to withhold their favors as the true mark of feminine self-respect, they were left doubly the victims of the selfish brutality and inadequacy of others.

There were documents of another sort as well, but these again, like Marxist theory, interested her less. For one thing, they were boring to read, being not so much exchanges of personal experience or expressions of personal rage as laboriously gathered and documented statements of the inequities of women's occupational status. These tended to convert their subject from an oppressed class into a pressure group, like a trade union, a conversion which did not release in her all those good ugly feelings but instead merely oppressed her with the implication of a need to act, to lobby in Washington or something, in general to perform good works. She supposed they were all absolutely true—women such-and-such a percentage of the labor force but only earning such-and-such a percentage of the annual earnings; women Ph.D.'s (a subspecies which it had always both tired and intimidated her to contemplate) without professorial rank; women (this piqued her more) holding only such-and-such a fraction of top executive jobs in the major American corporations. But despite their truth, they did not speak to her.

The Movement, of course, in wide variations of intensity of commitment and grievance, extended far beyond Women's Lib. At one end

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there was WITCH, an acronym for Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell. Its members were, as their name indicated, extremely shrill, and from her point of view rather silly. They did things like picketing bridal shows and holding public brassiere-burnings. (She continued to wear hers, in enhancement of as fashionably expensive a collection of clothes as she could afford.) On the other side were the kind of women she thought of as old-fashioned feminists, women who followed the lead of Mrs. Betty Friedan, say, author of *The Feminine Mystique*. Their program was to continue to demand in more or less traditional terms rights for women equal to those of men and to harp on such things as the need for young girls to prepare themselves for the securing of their rights, on the need for reordering women's education, and so on. Some few, but by no means all, of the new liberators were lesbians—her one college experience with lesbianism having made her extremely sensitive and accurate in the detection of these. Some, but very far from all, were as her lover had at first attempted to charge: homely, misfits, whose adherence to the Movement represented only their will to avenge themselves on the men who had always ignored them. There were those who, à la the blacks, thought to stage demonstrations against employers, demanding a quota of places for women in the echelons of management; and among these there was even a subgroup who, in the staging of one such demonstration against the male editor of a national woman's magazine, insisted on smoking his cigars and using the men's room. She would not have known precisely where to place herself in all this. Demonstrations like the last were certainly not her dish of tea; nevertheless, she supposed they were all in aid of the struggle to call attention to the problem. In any case she was, she had amply demonstrated to herself from college days, not cut out to be a joiner, only a supporter.

Her lover's first response to the Movement had been to giggle—somewhat nervously, she thought. She and their other female friends soon gave him reason to stop giggling. His contention that Women's Lib was nothing but a bunch of lesbians and homely girls grateful for their advances vanished in the discovery that not only she but most of the young, attractive, sexy girls she knew were being strangely roused by its propaganda. Next he tried to reason with her, advancing the arguments of human history, of innate biological difference, professing himself fully and forever liberal on the issue of equal pay for equal work, claiming his own virtue on the score of encouraging and allowing for her career, finally and in exasperation pointing out to her that as a husband he would still be expected to be the breadwinner and that, moreover, in his contentions both with the world and with her at home, he was the one not permitted to cry in the face of mistreatment. (Being a frequent and easy weeper, she was particularly infuriated by this last.) But all to no avail; for as he quickly found out, there is no appeal in argument from the absolute relativity of a position based on culture. Even granting that everything he said were so, she countered, it was still all his fault, since his very argument bespoke a passive acquiescence in the culture that made it so. They did not yet speak of these things as intimate individuals but rather as spokesmen for positions —about the act of sex, concerning which they both knew it impossible with the best will in the world to remain spokesmen, they spoke not at all —because they were not prepared to separate.

The blow-up between them over her liberation, when it came, was not about sex either: the possibilities for damaging one another by a head-on confrontation in this area were still too great for either of them to bear. Nor was the quarrel violent. It was, instead, an icy, steely, two-hour conversation which began with a complaint that she had forgotten to buy wine for their dinner; ranging from there across such topics as the unmade bed, his unlaundered shirts, her evident envy of a prize he had recently won for a newsphoto, his having interrupted her in the telling of a story at a recent dinner party; and ending with his assertion that if she were a writer she would simply write, as he simply took pictures, rather than spend half her time telling anyone who would listen about all the things that made writing difficult for her, and with her counter-assertion that if he had been secure as a man, he would have wanted her to be successful rather than being merely permissive about it, which was just a way of withholding his support while pretending not to. They lay in bed that night back to back, each staring out into his particular half of the room and wondering how long, for the sake of one's spiritual health, their affair ought to continue.

They were not to split up right away, for daily habit is powerful. They were possibly not in the end going to split up at all. But between them now, from breakfast to bed, would be the consciousness of a necessary, inevitable enmity and of the need to protect themselves most of all in the very place meant to be a haven from enemies —at home.

III

WHAT HAD brought this girl to such a pass? She was the pride, if the puzzle, of all who had a hand in her growing up. She was the envy of childhood friends. Even the society against whose "values" she had inveighed was eager to pronounce her, through all its media and honored spokesmen, a superior being to any it had heretofore produced. Nothing either—not even the once operative but now vanished no-

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tion of the beginner's apprenticeship to his elders —had stood externally between her and her personal ambition. Moreover, out in the real world, as in school and at home, nothing produced by this ambition would go without at least its due measure of attention. The question of marriage, the question of having children, were now entirely in her own keeping. Yet she saw herself, felt herself, believed herself to be, oppressed. Oppressed by the parents who had always stood in awe of the possibility of her unhappiness; oppressed by the schools which had tracked themselves according to the contours of her particular capacities; oppressed by the working world which had issued her its most solemn invitation; and oppressed above all by the men who had wished to enter with her into some more or less negotiable pact of mutual advantage.

Partly, of course, she felt oppressed because she was invited to do so by the expression all around her of the same feeling in others. Movements like Women's Lib always have some degree of that circularity about them. Which is to say, in addition to being expressions of a deep dissatisfaction, they do themselves constitute a culture of dissatisfaction, which gives it style and sanction among the *semblables* and *soeurs* of their leaders. And who would not, enjoying something less than divine happiness, be both soothed and excited by the idea that he was indeed a victim?

STILL, THERE must have been, had to have been, a very fertile ground in her own anxieties for all those public discontents to have taken hold there so quickly. A good deal of that anxiety had to do with her need to make a mark in the world. She had for the first time in her life suffered its very real pangs during her freshman year in college, when, bereft of a public identity, she had found herself quite unexpectedly with the need among strangers to, as it were, introduce herself. Such a demand must have existed for college freshmen everywhere and at all times, but no one had been less prepared for it by life than she. Convinced by the attitude of those around her that there would be no let or hindrance to her achievement, she was given to feel, on the other side, no corresponding pinch of necessity. Her condition in fact approached to not the least workable definition of freedom: a state in which all the options are open. She could succeed or get by; she could prepare herself to be fully self-supporting, to play some luxuriously "creative" if dependent role, or to enhance herself culturally and spiritually for a life of marriage and homemaking. She could stay in school or she could leave, to the disappointment of family and friends perhaps, but with none of the opprobrium attaching to what for a young man would have constituted the very definition of failure, future as well as present. Therefore she had to choose, and in choosing, stake something voluntarily on a definition of herself. This crisis as it was first enacted in school was, as we have seen, short-lived. Not only because she took the option to succeed but because, given her charm and the school's commitment to the idea of what would be the best for her, the institution itself became implicated in her making the "right" choice. There was, then, no genuine settlement, only a deferral of the problem.

Her one brief job counted for very little in this particular connection. For one thing, she had not got herself this job, it was given to her. For another, in her almost immediate decision not to throw in her lot with the magazine's lay the possibility to disregard altogether the question of her performance there. So what she actually knew of jobs she knew from hearsay. First, there was a crucial childhood memory: women sitting in the kitchen mornings over coffee, complaining of the dullness of the days with nothing but children for company while "he" was off in the city, mysteriously but no doubt profitably—and certainly no doubt pleasurably—spending his time "among people." The men who returned home each night had looked in the ordinary way of things tired from a day's work and often worried. Their conversation bespoke anything but a life of far-off adventure—they spoke of money a good deal, of problems, of enemies and allies. But the impression had been fixed: jobs were some kind of preserve of the privileged, they were meant to be interesting.

Then there were the jobs of her friends. Those among them who had been "best"—i.e., most liberally—educated seemed to have the least satisfying of these. Either, the complaint ran, the job was too routine and boring or it involved too many worries about things its holder preferred not to have to worry about—too much attention to precise detail, say, or being answerable to too many angry people when something went wrong. Funnily enough, though it was one of the cardinal planks in the feminist platform, very few of the complaints aired in her hearing had to do with money, except as an aspect of the appreciation or lack of appreciation being shown by management for the true qualifications and talents of the complainant. Nor did she ever hear a tale of someone's demanding more money at the risk of her resignation and being turned down.

What she heard most about, though she did not articulate it to herself in so simple a fashion, were problems of status. The girls she knew who were secretaries resented being called secretaries, they would without hesitation trade ten dollars a week for some title that to a hearer would gloss over their exact position in a hierarchy, and they seemed to resent most bitterly of all those (to their mind) housewifely services they were expected to provide, such as procuring coffee, buying gifts, making reservations, etc. And most of them refused absolutely to work for other women. For it was difficult enough to "serve" a man, but

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someone differentiated from them only by position and title was nearly intolerable. Those on the other hand who had jobs carrying independent responsibility tended to be even more restive, for either the work was found to contain too large a component of drudgery or the pay to be insufficiently honorific or—and this a very common complaint, she'd so briefly made it herself—the purposes of the enterprise for which they were asked to assume some measure of responsibility were uncongenial to them.

She never heard men issuing such complaints as these, except for that special breed of men she had always in her mind's privacy dubbed "losers"—who, no matter what they did, archly or self-righteously pronounced themselves superior to it and thereby were justified and ennobled in their failure. And putting all these things together—the "interestingness" of work to men, its obvious drudgery and lack of dignity for women—the conclusion was inevitable: the status of women was that of inferiors, they were not being handed a fair portion of that which had been preempted by, and was being desperately held as the nearly exclusive preserve of, men.

She had, to be sure, known men whose every day on the job involved them in a swallowing of pride, or at least the resignation to a good deal of unpleasantness, and who claimed to have no choice on the grounds of their need to support themselves and others. At college she had even met young men whose choice of studies and future career had hinged on some consideration of what was likely to yield the best return in terms both of money and conditions of work—though there were clearly many fewer of these than there had once been—and for them she and her friends had tended to feel a certain contempt. If there was, then, something of a logical flaw involved in training oneself for a life of monied leisure, in the study, say, of the English novel, only to find oneself bitter about being thought unqualified in spirit as well as training for valuable work, such a flaw was not taken by her friends to be their own. The world had been misrepresented to them, they said; or, more commonly now, the world, precisely in its unwillingness to make proper use of their superior endowments, was an evil place and must be forced to mend its ways.

For herself, a free-lance writer, the problem posed itself somewhat differently. She could not, in the actual conditions of work, claim to be discriminated against. She must inevitably sit down all by herself and face her typewriter. The product of this confrontation had to be judged immediately and found adequate or inadequate. Both the level and quantity of her production were up to her. But her difficulties were immense. She found she could not always do what she intended, and there were times when she would not meet her assignments at all. She often had to undergo that extremely painful experience for writers of having her work emended, altered, questioned, under what she came to feel was an altogether arbitrary editorial eye. In high school, then college, she had heard nothing but praise for whatever she was able to do. Now she was often criticized: editors rejected her, or people took exception to, umbrage at, something she'd published. She started to tighten up more and more at her typewriter. Once for a period of four or five months she was unable to write a sentence.

She began to tell herself that the real difficulty lay in the world's expectations of her. The people around her, thinking of her inevitably as a wife and mother, did not care if she wrote or not. Her lover, pretending sympathy, demanded that he have clean shirts and a made bed—her contribution to the upkeep of their common household thus being made equal to her attention to her own concerns. Editors, pretending interest in her, seemed to keep raising the ante on her performance, asking her to take on more and more ambitious projects and to be responsible to more, and a wider range of, subjects that intimidated her. To this last, she responded with an ever greater concentration on those subjects where her expertise might not be challenged. Finally, with a large assist from Women's Liberation itself, she found it most satisfying to write only about herself.

PRIMARY AMONG the things she wrote about herself was a continuing discussion, carried on through symposia in virtually all of the major national magazines, of her attitude to men and sex. She might have suspected there was something slightly redolent of the exploitation of women in the sudden spate of requests to discourse in public on the facts and circumstances of her own sexual temperament, but she did not. In the light of the overwhelming importance the matter had come to assume in her own eyes, she took its importance for others as a matter of course. Whatever reservation she might have had about exposing not only herself but all the men she'd slept with or refused to sleep with vanished under the impact of the knowledge that her experience, far from being private, was exemplary. She told of her unhappiness as a sexual object, of the lack of satisfaction with her so-called freedom, she described the humiliations of her abortion. Her declarations began to feed on themselves, and she truly warmed to her subject.

No one, not even her lovers, was as likely to be taken aback by her revelations as her own parents, particularly her mother. The sexual freedom she had been granted since early girlhood was something that had cost them, not only the guilt of discovering in themselves a certain old-fashioned emotional resistance to it that had to be suppressed in the name of principle and fairness of mind, but had brought them considerable pain of simple envy. The freedom so largely

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denied to, and so valiantly striven for by, her mother—which striving formed the basis of a vow that her own daughter's sexuality would not be distorted by adult hypocrisy and purposeless social punishment—had been her generation's very definition of sexual equality: the right to live within a single standard of sexual conduct, and the corresponding right to demand as well as to give sexual pleasure. Now here was her daughter, untortured by the longings that had once imposed upon herself the need for deceit and deviousness, assisted and supported in the realization of her true nature, claiming that it was precisely the possibility to have a wide sexual experience that constituted the major block to women's equality. For, said her daughter in effect, for a girl to be sexually active entangled her all the more with male egos and desires. And to seek pleasure in sex was to involve onself in judgments of success and failure that were essentially male, and not female, in character. A woman permitted honestly to seek her own needs, as men had since time immemorial been permitted to seek theirs, would be demanding love and respect for, and consideration of, her person, rather than the direct satisfaction of a lust she was in any case not sure she had ever felt.

Her lover's response to this was not so much to be taken aback as to feel a curious relief mingled with rage and guilt. His boyhood, too—and until this moment he had not realized to how great an extent—had been held in thrall to the myth of the new sexual freedom of women. His success with girls, for instance, had been measured not by the number of them he could bring to submission but by the degree of sexual satisfaction he could bring each or any of them to. Each sexual encounter had been a test of his prowess not as a hunter but as a provider. So to have stalked and overcome his prey was not the end but only the beginning of his ardors. To this end, he, too, had been successively monogamous, disciplining the lust which now need shame him only by its most flagrant weaknesses—its impatience and its reluctance to differentiate individuals. With the result, as he said to himself bitterly, that the woman to whom he had given most of himself—to the point, if she had asked it, of marriage—was now telling the world what she had never in deepest intimacy told him: that it had all been for naught. As his rage was that of having been betrayed, so his relief was that of knowing what it was, finally, that stood at the center of those delicate negotiations on which he had lavished so much anxiety, so much deluded consciousness. His guilt grew out of the suspicion that, withal, her problem was his responsibility, that had he but succeeded with her . . . mental habits, especially with respect to sex, after all, die hard; he thought, however, that if she called him selfish oppressor long enough and often enough, he might yet rid himself of that guilt.

As for her, the satisfactions of her new burst of self-expression blinded her to the fact that in the act of announcing women to be the equals of men, what she was really saying was that women were very different from men and that they wanted fundamentally different things. Nor was she aware that in her denunciation of men for keeping her from her true freedom what she was really denouncing them for was their having submitted to an earlier set of female demands, demands which had failed to bring her true happiness, demands she felt enslaved to rather than liberated by, and which she would abjure but knew not now in the name of what.

It is virtually an axiom of human nature that we will not know that which we are not forced to know. Thus given her upbringing and education, our heroine has attained to womanhood knowing very little about men and women. She need not know, for an elementary start, that the sexual revolution which oppresses her is a revolution made in her behalf by other women, wrested from men and assented to by them—as is always the politics of such cases—in the face of the power of the revolutionaries, and not from some notion of particular advantage to themselves. Nor need she, child of a marriage whose manners bespoke equality of husband and wife, know that marriage and children are not things imposed on women by men but quite the other way around. She would in fact be outraged by the proposition, taught in no school either of learning or life ever attended by her, that marriage is not a psychic relationship but a transaction: in which a man forgoes the operations of his blind boyhood lust, and agrees to undertake the support and protection of a family, and receives in exchange the ease and comforts of home.

Above all, being a creature of the 60's rather than the 50's, she need not know that freedom is an end in itself, a value whose strongest connections are thus not with happiness but with responsibility. The freedom granted her by society is, in so short a time as it has been demanded, remarkably equal to that enjoyed by men. It is the freedom to make certain choices and take the consequences. If she wishes to devote herself to marriage, she may do so. If she wishes instead to pursue a career, she may do so. If there are difficulties put in the way of the latter—of which her sex may or may not be one but is certainly not the only one and is often indeed not the one she complains of—she is free to attempt to overcome them. If she opts to have both marriage and a career, she will put herself in the way of certain inevitable practical difficulties, the managing of which will on the other hand also widen her options for gratification.

Perhaps most important, if she wishes not to be a sexual object, she may refrain from being

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one. What, after all, is to stop her from setting her own social and emotional price on her sexual complicity and then simply waiting for the man, if any, who is willing to pay it? If the price should be deemed too high, that also would be a freely chosen consequence. Or she might accept the implication of most of the pronouncements of Women's Liberation and simply remain chaste, thereby restoring to herself that uniquely feminine power over men which many women so cavalierly made light of in their struggle for equality. Freedom, runs a social theory thought by her educators too stodgy to trouble her pretty head with, can only be granted by others in theory; its realization can lie only in one's enactment of it.

To judge from what she says and does, however—finding only others at fault for her predicaments, speaking always of herself as a means of stating the general case, shedding tears as a means of negotiation—the freedom she truly seeks is of a rather different kind. It is a freedom demanded by children and enjoyed by no one: the freedom from all difficulty. If in the end her society is at fault for anything, it is for allowing her to grow up with the impression that this is something possible to ask. Even the good fairies who attended her birth would never have dared so far.

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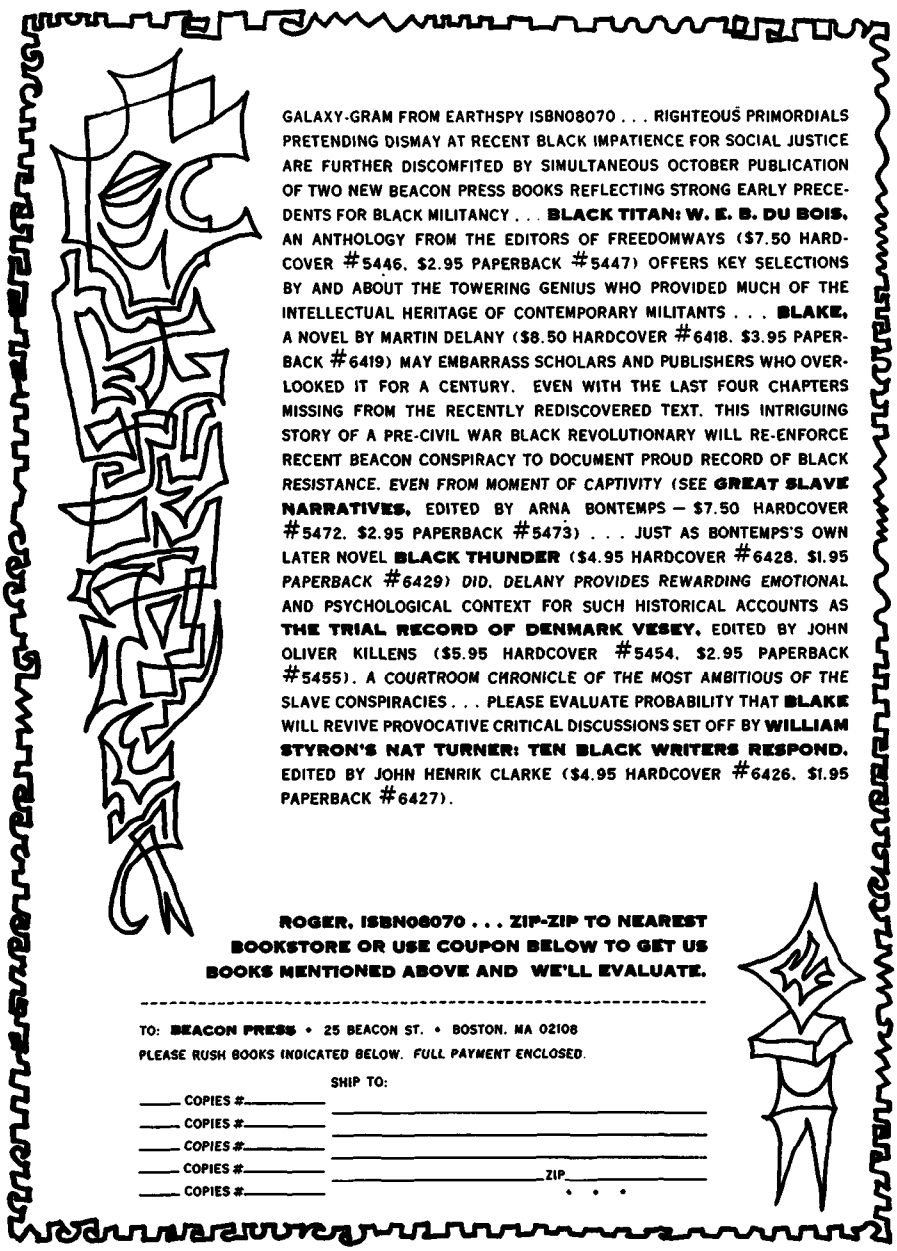
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Cairo Journal

Joan Colebrook

TO THE north, Constanta and Odessa: to the south, the Bosphorus. The plane circling in a landscape of rich sunset-colored clouds. When the single word *Yesilkoy* springs into focus, it is surrounded by greenish lights, like the fey lights found in marshes; but the plane door opens to the terminal at Istanbul. Blonde, Norwegian, mini-skirted hostesses (suntanned from days of leave in Cairo) file down the aisle, and give place to dark-eyed houris encased in tight navy-blue.

Reflections about leaving the well-integrated civilization of Europe for the less orderly African scene seem irrelevant. Especially in face of the fact that at a time when the people of the Nile dressed themselves in linen, used the stylus, the comb, and the paintbrush, human sacrifices still hung upon the trees of the gloomy European forests. Since that time, of course, one area had happened to develop, another to remain more static; so that on leaving Europe one leaves also a certain familiarity. Yet under the rule of technology, history has lost some of its edge . . . crossing the dark Mediterranean means nothing but time to drink a highball, idly to turn the pages of a magazine, to see that it advertises Renaults and Madame Rochas. To look at the clock and note it is 2:00 A.M. To gaze out at Arabic hieroglyphics sprawled in fire across the dark delta below.

And now I am in an air terminal, vast as a soiled temple, where black and white decor reaches to a far-away roof, where porters move slowly; where languid clerks, their white uniforms rumpled, carry out casual duties under lighting which has in it a slight touch of underseas green. In spite of a minimum of entry delay, there seems the possibility that this laissez-faire attitude might turn to hostility. Underneath the high arc of roof, where occasional dogs wander, where small groups of travelers cluster, where dark excited children (who should be in bed) chase each other to and fro, the human element is lessened, as in a mosque. Occasionally, too, there is the glint of light on the Russian submachine guns carried by soldiers on the runway outside.

My ragged porter pushes his way past them, however, with one deferential finger hung in the air; his hooked nose stretches wide in a grin as he places the bag in a battered taxi, holds out his palm, and asserts with a kind of ferocious innocence, "Welcome . . .," and I see as we drive off a water tank, the dark shape of lily leaves, and the spires of papyrus (symbols of that civilization familiarized by reliefs on vessels and tombs, by hieroglyphs on gold, wood, basalt—by the very division of the days into hours). As if to affirm this civilization's importance, the taxi driver pauses in his mad career along empty greenish-lit highways, to pass to me ceremoniously a small spray of waxy, cloyingly-sweet flowers, and then to sweep his arm across space at a shape looming up ahead of us, and to cry with a peculiar shrill lilt, "Mr. Ram-*sees*."

Drawn into the heart of Cairo, the heat even now invades the interior of the cab; bringing with it the sight of a city still awake, still in some places bargaining and selling, figures gathering around stalls pinpointed by flares of reddish-gold, or figures lying with classic anonymity on roads, in doorways, or in the very center of the division between the traffic lanes. Thin brown legs stride, white cloth slaps at ankles—a family, a man with a child on his shoulders, a white bundled mouse of a woman running behind. Another woman laughs under a light; her shiny green blouse shows enormous breasts as she leans back quivering with laughter. One gets the impression of a vast, shabby, half-sleeping city, accented by dark trees struggling with shadow, earth- and stone-colored even under the black night.

In the hotel lobby three or four disheveled men lounge at the desk or on the stairs, but multiply at the arrival of a solitary guest; bow, line up, seize bags, bustle into the elevator, cry "*Welcome!*" One unlocks a door, one opens closets, one opens shutters, folds up a Nile-green coverlet, swipes ineffectually at sleepily buzzing flies. One announces with proud affection and possessiveness, "I, room boy." A taller one grins, showing discolored teeth, bringing together shoes loose on brown heels, murmuring, "You Ingleesh, nice, very nice . . .," and then, pointing to the balcony, cries triumphantly, "Cairo!"

JOAN COLEBROOK, here making her first appearance in COMMENTARY, writes regularly for the *New Yorker* magazine and is the author of *The Cross of Lassitude*, a study of the urban poor, and of several novels. The present essay, based on Miss Colebrook's visit to the Middle East in 1969, will form part of a book in progress.

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And indeed at dawn (as Kipling said, "Always keep a new city till morning"), coming out onto that balcony the city is to be seen—stretching sand-colored on and on, picked out by palms and myrtles, elongated by flattened roofs upon which one sees already a few tiny black-robed figures; rounded finally by mosques where minarets shimmer in the distance as in a mythical dazzling storm of sand. At that moment Cairo captures the imagination; even as a faint smell of urine is blown toward the balcony, as the steady August sun burns on iron and wood, as flies crawl slowly on the skin.

In 1960 when the apparently incorruptible Nasser was at the height of his power, this city was the focal point of Arab politics. Pasha-ridden and backward, Egypt had been given its independence; and Nasser had engaged in a program of social revolution, bestowing land upon the landless, education upon those without education, and power upon a new class of technocrats and officers.

Now, nine years later, the man who used to walk unprotected in the streets, who engaged so enthusiastically in everything from diplomacy to nationalization, from dam-building to rocket-making, is not to be separated from secret-service men who quietly enter buildings before his appearances, or from a personality cult which includes humorless salutes in articles and advertisements, and even sometimes on the paper which wraps parcels ("Long Life to Our Beloved President—Gamal Abdul Nasser"). There have been also the shifts in the Third World (with Nehru dead; Ben Bella, Nkrumah, and Sukarno displaced; and the Arab world penetrated by the Soviets). There have been the arrests of "Jews" and "Capitalists"; the costly campaign in the Yemen; continued unemployment and overpopulation along with lowered production and the depletion of the exchequer. Above all there has been the continuance of a messianic view; a growing dependence upon the USSR; and the disastrous Six-Day War. From my balcony I look down upon a city for which the future is uncertain.

War has stopped tourism in its tracks and the guides at the door of the hotel throw themselves with rapacity upon the only two Europeans in evidence—an Austrian engineer and myself; one feels that this is less for financial gain than for some belief in their own roles. The needs of war have closed up the Canal zone and most of the country in the immediate vicinity of Cairo. One cannot travel east or west or further south than Luxor; one needs special permission to visit the oasis district of Fayum. One's passport has to be stamped at each hotel, and in any district which is not immediately central. In the hotel, one walks through empty corridors, eats in dining rooms without diners. And although it is the hot month—August—when officials are taking their leaves, or spending long weekends at Alexandria, the sense of stasis goes deeper than this. It is the feeling of a vacuum, of a lowering of standards, of a cultural loss. Choice seems to have been taken away, the choice of movement, of intellectual activity, of reading matter, even the choice of food. (As a Greek *bon vivant* said to me sadly later on, "This is a city where people used to love to eat, and make love. Now they only make love.")

In the street a young man in a brown shirt and gray pants rushes out of a building and waylays me, trying to herd me into his shop. "*Welcome. Welcome. . . .*" The dark interior has a musty smell and contains only a faded carpet, several glass cases, and a number of oldish-looking bottles. "I have many essences . . . this is *my* shop . . . *my* shop, Madame. You are *welcome. . . . welcome.*" Across the way three workmen are washing out the fountain in front of a building where the brass plate says AMBASSADOR OF FRANCE; one sees their bony feet paddling in the water, the tails of their robes tucked ingeniously around their waists. The building is lined with sandbags and one remembers the war. Up the river there sweeps a cool breeze, a breeze which sweeps the dust of the avenues before it and seems like a current of iced air superimposed upon the reality of the hot valley. It is a valley which stretches for many miles. Perennially cultivated, it varies in width from one to fifteen miles, and stops short where human cultivation stops and the desert abruptly takes over; the Arabian desert on one side, the Libyan on the other. The city of Cairo bears witness to the valley's richness, and the glittering Nile waters roll by in full flood.

IN THE spread-out beige-dun-gold conglomeration of buildings, amateur historians grope for the past. To wander through the new Shepheard's Hotel is to be struck by the hard-to-get-to-the-center so characteristic of the Moslem tradition of marble, stonework, screenwork, paneling, married to vast entrance halls and passages. The hotel was founded in 1841 on the site once occupied by Napoleon, was rebuilt in 1891, and entirely rebuilt in 1957. For British influence one has to look no farther than the Victorian stone lions which guard the bridge over the Nile; or to Tahrir Square, the area behind the Hilton, site of the British Quasr-el-Nil barracks; or to the (present) British Library built by Lord Kitchener and once a spectacular ballroom; or to the Embassy itself, center of power after 1889, when Lord Cromer, modestly known as Consul General, was in actuality the de facto ruler of Egypt.

In the street of Abdul Kader Hamza, the resituated British Turf Club has a neglected look, in spite of spectacular carved wooden doors with huge brass rings and the interior with drawing rooms and sitting rooms where old copies of *Punch* lie on small tables. Here again British

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social power operated with orderly snobbery (Lord Kitchener ousted Egyptian members). Yellow clippings make references to the past; to meetings, subscription lists (headed by Kitchener), to rules ("no unseemly noise on the premises"). The present Greek manager (in many cases Greeks replaced the British after the Revolution), a short, bald, and slightly mournful little man, affirms that the club still operates, but whether it is still British is open to question. "In the old days we had more than four hundred members and about one hundred and fifty country members as well. And they were all British, but now . . .," he shakes his head, "about sixty or less." I ask if they still play cricket and he looks shocked. "Of course! And some of them ride at Giza on the edge of the desert." In 1952 the club had been burned and looted. He shows me a sad album of photographs of charred doorways and devastated interiors. "No one is quite sure who was responsible for the arson." He nods his bald and disillusioned head. "But we more or less know who they were."

ANOTHER GREEK, a plump, intelligent man who runs a place much frequented by foreigners and small literati, tells me of the fire as he saw it from his then St. James restaurant. "There had been rioting. . . . British were hunted, killed, mutilated. . . . I saw my whole fortune burning. . . . I was standing about a hundred yards away and could do nothing because when the fire brigade started sending water, the Moslem Brothers put more incendiary powder on the flames . . . and while Cairo was burning, what do you think King Farouk was doing?" His plump shoulders shake with laughter. "Why he was giving a party for officers of the army and the police. So that no one was free to help to stop the fire. Like Nero, he was fiddling while his city burned." I ask what it had been like in those days, and he speaks of the feeling of tension and emptiness. "There was much gossip going on behind Farouk's back, stories of his sending gold out of the country, of his buying ammunition left over from the war for a million dollars and placing it to his account as fourteen million pounds, of the conspiracy being hatched by the Student Union and the Moslem Brotherhood to take over the government. . . . Then there was anti-foreign feeling which was strong. In the end they took down all the old names of the shops, banks, and clubs." (Nasser later changed "Turkish" coffee to "Arabian" coffee, and altered the "Persian" Gulf to the "Arabian" Gulf.)

The credit for the Revolution goes to an amalgamation of social and political forces. To poverty and exploitation. To confusion and the erosion of governmental structure. Into an anti-Western and anti-Israeli framework there fell neatly the natural activities of the paramilitary, anti-infidel Moslem Brotherhood (Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimum, famous for its terroristic methods and for having sent a delegation to the Nuremberg Rally in 1936). The Free Officers Corps operated in much the same context; some of its members were pro-Brotherhood, some were influenced by the radical and violent Mirs al-Fatat, some had been pro-Nazi during World War II. There were also, of course, Communists or Marxists with axes of their own to grind.

According to Dan Kurzman, an American correspondent then stationed in the Middle East, the belief was current in Cairo at the time of the riot that the Polish Embassy had cooperated with the fanatically anti-Western Moslem Brotherhood. At all events, the Polish Ambassador was asked to leave the country. Two days afterward, Kurzman interviewed Haj Amin el Husseini, the former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, who has been described as the "most durable master of intrigue in the Arab world" (he was Hitler's agent in the Middle East during World War II; he was suspected of being the chief spirit behind the assassination of King Abdullah of Jordan who had sought peace with the Israelis in 1951; and, more recently, in 1964 he was involved in the formation of the Fatah in Syria under the leadership of Yasir Arafat). Kurzman described the Haj, dressed in a long black robe and a flaring white turban, and quoted him as saying, as he played with the fringe of his beard, that he himself had not been involved in the riots, but that the Arabs would cooperate with anyone who would help them to throw the British out of the Suez Canal Zone, and the Jews out of Palestine.

An Egyptian historian explains to me later that after the war the Egyptian Communist party was able to gain a new lease on life and to act as a catalytic force. "Members helped to draft the literature for the Free Officers party, for instance, and played a key role in some of the riots which brought about changes. Most of the intellectuals were somewhat leftist, it was a general climate; yet few of us were devoted to Russian-style Communism. You can see that such a situation was open to exploitation and was exacerbated as well by the Israeli presence. I myself am not ambitious in the military sense, but after '48 some of the more excitable disliked hearing the Israeli radio boasting that one Israeli was worth three Iraqis and six Egyptians! The Brotherhood made a lot out of that; they called for *Jihad*; they attacked every element—the foreigners, the Jews, the government. They worked with the Marxist students at the university. When the government repressed them, they went underground."

I ask to what extent Nasser himself had been influenced by Marxist concepts. The historian says briefly that, of course, Nasser had suppressed the Communists, but that Khalid Muhieddin, who was an original member of the

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Free Officers Executive and an extreme leftist, had been a friend of Nasser's and had supposedly introduced him to various intellectuals who may have influenced his way of thinking; to Dr. Rashed Barawi, for instance, who translated *Das Kapital* into Arabic. The historian smiles modestly and adds, "Any of us might have influenced him. After all, it was in some ways a question of a *tabula rasa*. You have to imagine many political combinations; the use of the energy of all groups to eliminate the West, to defeat the Israelis, to rouse our stagnant country. How much was necessary . . . how much preordained . . .?" He waves his long, narrow hand.

* * *

THE NAME OF Giza is now lost on the edges of a noisy, half-modernized suburb. Our taxi approaches it via crowded streets, via a highway bordered with new blocks of flats and rather vulgar villas complete with domes and minarets. There are odd combinations of color; dull red and mustard, lime green and ocher. The small black, frequently-tooting taxis scatter the boys, the women with bare feet, the occasional camel. Even here, close to the center of Cairo, where the numerous stalls sell cigarettes, Egyptian sweets, and an aniseed drink, men stretch out on the pavement, in utter abandonment to the brilliant day; they adopt the earth as their home, and as they lie at peace in the dust I remember that traditionally the babies of the *fellahin* were not washed until seven days after birth! Past a long line of rickety-looking but often pretentious nightclubs, the taxis slow down, as if in respect: Palais des Pyramides, Salle Dorée, Sahara City, Auberge des Pyramides, Arizona, etc. Later I go to one of these with a sophisticated Egyptian, and am surprised to find myself sitting at a small table watching a quintet of English beauties who might have come out of an early 30's music hall in Brighton. They are performing to a swinging version of "I Could Have Danced All Night." "Do you think this importation of talent is a contribution?" the Egyptian asks with a dubious smile. He tells me that he is sorry we have missed the belly dancer, who after all is indigenous and performs a slightly bastardized version of what was once a premarriage ritual.

Past the nightclubs, "ageless Egypt" is evident again. (Egyptians generally speak of "Ageless Egypt" with a special intonation.) There are squares of green tended by barefoot men in white gowns; the blue-green of cabbages, emerald of growing corn, splashed color of summer flowers. White cranes dot the fields. The shabby camels stand patiently or sink to the earth with their characteristic, strangely human gesture. A woman passes by, erect as one of the cranes, carrying three of four of the cabbages on her head, her long black dress clinging lovingly to her slender braceleted ankles. Beautiful as she is, her figure has a cadaverous look, that same classic emaciation one gets accustomed to in India. Not far away, in the back streets, many of the houses are the traditional peasant houses made of gray adobe—soil mixed with chopped grass and Nile water. Here city workers turned *fellahin* live lives similar to those in the more rural regions; as one writer says, immune to "colds, headaches, mosquitoes, flies, fleas, and vilest odors": sleeping on the *mastaba,* or earth platform, drinking, like a drug, black tea boiled and sweetened. More villas and more blocks of flats, restaurants where people sit outdoors under gigantic eucalyptuses, and, tormented by flies, eat flat bread, cucumber and tomato salad, and grilled fish from the ponds. The horizon stretches on and up. The houses thin. And then in the heat ahead, blatantly oppressive at midday, mysterious at evening, and sometimes dreamlike as the haze of sun and sand marries with some fortunate slant of light to bring out their towering dimensions—the Pyramids.

Again the hotel is almost empty. Smiling servants in lavishly-embroidered costumes walk on worn but rosy carpets, doze in the elevator opposite intricately-carved cupboards and screens and tables inlaid with mother-of-pearl, gaze out from the 19th-century interior toward the desert sands. Harem-style lamps with red and green glass are slung on elaborate iron-work brackets, and give a sense of fatality to empty rooms. Casual visitors drink at tables in large formal gardens. From the Pyramids almost at the door, the camel drivers approach with intent desperation, and one sees the little shops deserted in seas of dust, and filled with cheap imitations of old handicrafts. During the day only a few brave souls wander in and out of the tombs; at night a constant procession of cars sweeps up the road to park under the shadow of the Pharaonic past. One does not exactly know what is happening in Egypt; but one knows that it is ostensibly, at least, in its time of "people's politics." There are signs of an effort—half-desperate perhaps—to create the matrix of a new society. Some of those I speak to mention this effort in the same breath and with the same ironic intonation ("Marching to Socialism" and "The First Stage of Socialist Reconstruction") as they mention "Ageless Egypt."

I walk up the long dusty slope to Kheops: that burden of human effort, that monument to sweat, that 746-foot base by 450-foot height of faith and fatalism, that ancient creation which looked, Khrushchev told the Egyptians with sublime peasant tactlessness, when placed by monuments in Moscow's Red Square, like a "heap of manure."

It costs ten piasters to enter the museum of King Farouk's palace; and the price is low for

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the historical perspective. The building itself is oppressive; the state desk of this Eastern-minded monarch is made of heavy black granite and is as inert as an Aztec statue. Polished pink granite gives little relief; the delicately carved screens inlaid with mother-of-pearl present the motifs of a slave past. One mounts to the second story on a marble and alabaster staircase, where the rounded rail-heads are illuminated by interior light. (Egyptian alabaster throws out a deep pink Oriental glow, so that one thinks of harems and eunuchs.) The impression is heightened in the upstairs dance hall where the lights in great columns turn to rose and gold. The ceiling is a sky. There are gilt chairs and badly-painted murals of modern daughters of the Nile. The bedroom is done in Nile-green satin, and a cradle canopied by a crown brings a comment from the guide who has caught up with me after a breathless race.

"*Bébé* Ahmud Faud—*bébé*." He takes the small satin pillow and thrusts it into my hands, "*Bébé* Italian." I ask what happened to the baby. Smiling broadly, perhaps not understanding, the guide replies, "OK."

Recording their experiences in the Egypt of the past, sensitive travelers condemned the exploitation of the peasants. (Wilfred Blunt, for instance, the English poet, saw during his 19th-century stay, rapacious tax collectors seizing the peasants' goats, cows, and donkeys, and even the small golden ornaments around their wives' necks.) Most serious scholars, commenting on feudal conditions outside the cities, characterized Farouk's regime as corrupt and profligate (the royal family numbered 370 in all, including ten princes, twenty-seven princesses, and forty-eight members of the nobility; it owned property worth $180 million and had hold of 190,000 acres, more than a third of what was to be expropriated by revolutionary decrees). Looking at the palace accoutrements and remembering that Nasser, who was a village postman's son, is economical in his personal habits, and still lives (ostensibly) in an unpretentious house which might be occupied by a middle-class clerk in the U.S., it is easy to feel sympathy for him. (This feeling is later damped down when one learns that Nasser's much-publicized austerity does not extend to all of his surroundings, not to his heavily-guarded villas on the beach at Alexandria, with their marble-lined bathrooms and sixteen chefs; nor to the lives of his sons with their speed boats and luxurious imported cars, nor to his daughters who are reported to return from Paris with numerous boxes of expensive dresses.)

Yet none of this affects the validity of the Revolution, or its natural place in the procession of events. Against the fatal weaknesses of the King—who surrounded himself with foreign hangers-on, who, according to various accounts, appropriated for himself some national treasures, and who regularly looked under his bed for assassins—one might balance the real or imagined oppression of colonial rule. Squirming under British control, Farouk's bitter humiliation—if less pure than Nasser's—could not have been very different to endure. In a sense they belong to the same stream of history. It is noticeable that after coming to power, Nasser began to fall more and more into his role of messianic avenger, until on the occasion of the nationalization of the Canal, he addressed the British, who "sucked our blood and stole our rights"; the Americans, "may you choke in your fury"; and his own people, "O citizens—the Suez Canal has been nationalized . . . and it will be run by Egyptians—Egyptians—Egyptians!"

It is enough that, symbolically and actually, when the Revolution began, "Palace Time" stopped short. The calendars in the royal offices, engraved as they were with portraits of King Farouk, remained stationary; torn off on that historic date—June 26, 1952. "Revolution Time" had begun.

* * *

SCENES SHIFT from the active sensuous life of the bazaars and *souks*, from the crowded back streets, the hovels and courtyards, from the city edges where the camel drivers and workmen, ex-*fellahin* and street sellers struggle to exist from day to day, from hour to hour, to that relatively rational milieu of the middle-class literate, the bureaucrats and technocrats, the army officers and students.

Every morning the paper (generally the *Egyptian Gazette*) is pushed under the doors of hotel rooms. Three or four pages of print, much of it an indulgence in indignation, condemnation, and bizarre distortion. It is August 25 and an emergency meeting is being called at the Arab League because of the fire set the Thursday before in Jerusalem's Al Aksa Mosque. There is no stressing of the fact that the arsonist is apparently a religious maniac. President Nasser declares that "real force" must now be used against Israel. Israel is responsible, along with the United States, of course, whose creature she is held to be. King Feisal of Saudi Arabia is calling for a Holy War. An editorial rejects the thought of justice by law.

> Who has any faith in Israeli justice—the Israelis are world experts in judicial murder as the case of Adolf Eichmann demonstrated . . . who . . . was captured . . . tried and executed by his accusers.

El Sayed Soloman el Nabulsy, chairman of the Committee for the Rescue of Jerusalem, says that the arson was only a preliminary "to the Zionist plan to set up Solomon's temple on the site of the blessed Moslem shrine."

Varied messages of sympathy keep coming in

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from world groups. There is a generalized call for "liberation," for *Jihad*, for "purging the land." In the same paper it is announced rather matter of factly that fifteen more spies will die in Iraq, at dawn on the following day. This will be the fourth time this year, it is announced with approval, that spies will be hung in Iraq. There is a horrifying memory of the fourteen Iraqis, including nine Jews, left hanging in the Baghdad square on January 27 of this year.

On August 26, King Feisal is calling upon his forces to be ready for *Jihad*. He says, in reply to a cable from Prince Sultan, who informs him that the army is ready for the "Battle of Destiny," that Arab patience is exhausted. An editorial also suggests that "this fire will light the path of the Arab people," and all along the Israeli-Lebanon front there are attacks by Arab guerrillas. Almost simultaneously there are explosions in the London office of the Israeli Zim Navigation Company (Arab guerrilla organizations are reported to have sent agents to London). The editorial now speaks of the "brazen impertinence of the Israelis." The writer sounds pained that Abba Eban is accusing the Arab leaders of "reviving medieval incitement to interfaith religious warfare"; and he says "the bizarrerie of this statement is breathtaking!" The prime policy of Israel, the editorial says, is to "carry out a Jewsade."

Moslems in Ceylon, Indonesia, Kuala Lumpur, rally to the cause. Yugoslavia and Somalia send support, and a day later there are to be more demonstrations in Malaysia where students, along with their more fanatical elders, are to call for *Jihad*. Now Mr. Mohammed Natsir, a Moslem leader in Indonesia, tells reporters that Israel had "long planned to get rid of the Mosque."

I read the paper faithfully for all the days I am in Cairo; more fascinated by it than by the inadequate breakfast at this luxury hotel where butter, milk, and cream are of such inferior quality and the eggs are as small as those of pigeons. Like a recent visitor to Cairo who claimed that after depending upon the Egyptian papers for his news he began to get a rather "curious" view of the world, I sometimes find my own sense of reality slipping. By the 27th there have been attempts on the life of Yigal Allon, and shelling of south Jerusalem. Two big stores in London (Marks and Spencer and Selfridge's, both with Israeli links) are threatened by arsonists. The paper congratulates the country that guerrilla attacks are continuing relentlessly, that rockets are exploding on the Israeli border settlement of Yardena, and that responsibility for the Mosque fire, set by "Jewish fascists and their supporters, notably the U.S.," is being revenged. Someone writes a letter to the paper stressing the fact that "the Koran says an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"; the letter ends with "Long Live the Glory of Islam."

Always interesting in the *Gazette* are those articles which relate to the USSR, the tone sometimes bringing back echoes of Nazi propaganda in the late 30's. Reading a small piece rationalizing the Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939, one remembers the revelation that Nazi refugees were absorbed into Nasser's propaganda machine and are among the most active of government journalists. This particular article, which leans heavily upon *Pravda*, also points up the propaganda links with the USSR. I am reminded of the defection of a Soviet officer in Burma, who disclosed that one of his jobs had been to translate and dole out anti-Western articles written in Moscow for insertion in newspapers subsidized for this purpose by Ivan Mikhailovich Vozniy, First Secretary at the Soviet Embassy in Rangoon. More evidence still of Russian-Middle East links is the display of military solidarity. Israeli (or for that matter Western) confidence cannot be increased by the news that on August 26 Transport No. 26 crossed through the Bosphorus, making the sixty-fifth Russian naval unit to enter the Mediterranean since the '67 war. On September 3, four Russian warships are to be tied up in Algiers. Russian attitudes to the firing of the Mosque suggest a well-controlled satisfaction; there are constant references to the event, and these references call for more solidarity among the Arab states. Since no single act could have been more calculated to elicit support from the conservative Arab states and to spark a renewed call for a Holy War (and since no act could have been more damaging to Israeli interests), it seems that any Israeli might be excused a slight hint of paranoia, a not illogical belief that the young Australian, Rohan, had been a leftist or Pan-Arab tool. If there is no evidence of this, the Egyptian press, by continually stressing Israeli guilt, makes the weak-minded reader forget that there is even *less* evidence for the other. Moreover, the constant use of words like blood, fire, revenge, purge, steadily corrupts one's sense of proportion.

AFTER READING the paper each morning and being in contact with the Egyptian people (in whose name these violent pronouncements are made), there is continual surprise at their affectionate simplicity, their gentle and civilized attitude. Two hotel maids—Mena and Zara—black eyes liquid with interest and good will, provide the guests with clean towels, flowers, and attention.

"He is a nice man," Zara declares of Nasser. Her short shiny bob swings forward as she smooths covers and sheets, and arranges roses on the table near the window.

"And a hero." Mena is tall with black hair wound around an oval olive-skinned face. She is the daughter of a peasant who was active in the Revolutionary Council in her village, and because of this, she has work in the hotel as part of a course in hotel management. "Every Egyp-

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tian, all the people, they like Nasser very much."

Nasser certainly seems popular with the lower classes, though bureaucrats and government officials are supposed to be appalled at the mess he has gotten them into ("the holy war has gotten us into a holy mess"), and the more intelligent and dissident of these fear further repression. This is indicated by the kinds of statements Nasser made in the months before my arrival, all of them smacking of Soviet-style calls to "solidarity against enemies of the people." In a June issue of the *Illustrated London News*, Nasser is quoted as stating that he himself has been at fault for allowing a "new class" to arise, and that "we must be aware of the counterrevolution . . . we cannot give freedom to the enemies of the people." These phrases are almost identical to those which all through the year have been sounded in Czechoslovakia as the political purge continues there. Moreover, the phrases are reminiscent of the Russian request after the Six-Day War (via *Pravda* and *Izvestia*) for "the dismissal of all those who were spreading doubts about the nature of the Soviet-Egyptian relations and calling for a resumption of friendly relations with the U.S.A." It is in the light of such obvious guidance of Egyptian policy that Westerners must view Russia's whole future role in Egypt and any deal she proposes vis-à-vis the Middle East emergency.

I sound out the two maids about Nasser.

"He is good because he guides the people and gives them rights." They both tell stories of the past; Mena maintains that the *fellahin* used to sell their babies for £5, and still have nothing but "work . . . work . . . work."

"Now the *fellahin* are rich," Mena maintains. Then she admits more thoughtfully, "Yes, if you searched the village, you would find rich and poor."

"If there is milk, the babies get it," Zara tells me. Then she points out of the window in the direction of Cairo, and says that Cairo is no longer poor. "We make the mini-factory and the High Dam."

Both girls say that they like foreigners, because foreigners are very "democratic." There is a reversion to nationalism, as Mena, her eyes swimming with emotion, asks why America helps the Jews against the Arabs. I suggest that the papers they read don't always give them the right impression, and Zara hastily upholds the Egyptian tradition of hospitality. "You are welcome here . . . welcome. . . ." Then she smiles, wrinkles her nose, and measures with her hand, "I like you, I like you so much—as a small chicken or a cat!"

Later she comes to me with a copy of the paper and asks why we (that is, the Americans) set fire to the Holy Mosque. I explain that neither the American nor the Israeli government set fire to the Mosque; that it was a deranged Australian. We talk in confused terms about the UN and about the distinction between individual acts and government acts. Rather unfairly I mention that an Egyptian mob had burned down Shepheard's Hotel; and a mob had also burned down the American library. Were the whole Egyptian people to be blamed for that? Zara shifts ground a little and states that before the Six-Day War Israel had wanted to get all the territory from the Nile to Iraq.

"In '49," she says, "the British gave the Jewels the right to exploit Palestine, and now America gives the Jewels planes. It is difficult for me to speak in English. . . . But America makes training of how to war with the Egyptian people. . . ."

It is scarcely surprising that Zara should equate the Americans with the Israeli enemy, for hadn't Nasser himself said just before the war, "What is Israel—Israel today is the U.S.," and a day or two later, "We are not facing Israel—we are facing the West."

I try to indicate that it hadn't been so simple, that the Jews had bought part of the land, that some of Palestine had belonged to Turkey, that a number of nations, including Russia, had supported the creation of a Jewish state. I point out that even if the paper she holds says that the Israelis want the territory from the Nile to Iraq this may not be true. Besides, I say, the Israelis in 1947 had been ready to agree to partition; in fact, up to the Six-Day War they had planned their weapons for defense only. We talk about the history of arms sales in the Middle East, how America had at first tried to sell evenly to both countries; that if the U.S. now helps Israel it is partly because Russia broke the arms balance by helping Egypt; that it is now *Russia* who trains the Egyptians in arms and warfare. Zara makes a face at this. Though Mena, as the daughter of a revolutionary, is in favor of Russia's presence, Zara supports the more general view that the Russians are getting too much power. I add that Egypt gave hospitality to the Nazi scientists who came to live here after the defeat of Hitler, and of whom the Israelis, naturally, are afraid. Zara listens, wide-eyed. She returns throughout the morning, blushing as she tries to avoid the stern housekeeper, eager to persuade me to visit her village.

TYPICAL of the kind of fantasy served up to the people by the Egyptian press was the headline carried by the *Gazette* on Friday, June 9, during the Six-Day War, which said: ISRAELIS SUFFER MORE ON ALL FRONTS. UAR SMASHES BACK. This was a day *after* Egypt had agreed to accept a cease-fire. It is doubtful whether the Arab masses—even the Menas and Zaras who read well—still understand the extent of Egypt's defeat. A certain vagueness, denial, and indignation accompany discussions of the war. A few days later I am standing in the street when I see an Egyptian soldier in a rather

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worn khaki uniform with his arm in a brace, and also seemingly perched on one foot. The skin of his face has a greenish pallor and when he sees me watching him, he self-consciously puts both feet on the ground and gives me a half-smile as if to excuse himself. I try to find out whether he had been wounded in the Six-Day War or more recently, and am reminded of that devastating description in the Churchill book of the aftermath in '67, when thousands of Egyptian soldiers, the tattered remnants of an army, abandoned by their officers, most of their equipment taken, destroyed, or discarded, made their way, thirsty and often shoeless, toward the Canal. The book describes how Israeli rescue helicopters, flying low over the desert, saw many lying where they had fallen, their skin blackened, spread-eagled on the hot sands. I find that the soldier speaks no English, but his pale hook-nosed face constantly breaks into a smile as he points to the brace on his arm. While I am trying to communicate with him, another man—taller and fierce-looking—wearing a tight cotton suit wet with sweat, breaks in angrily: "What are you asking him? What do you say?" I look astonished. "He doesn't speak English. I was going to ask him how he was wounded." The second man addresses the first in a flood of Arabic, his arms flailing, his eyes blazing. "It's got nothing to do with him," I protest. "He said nothing to me. I was trying to find out. . . ." "Ah," the second man says, "strangers come to find out what they can. If you know what is good, you will not ask."

I wonder whether the man is in any way connected with the Ikhwan (the Brotherhood), one of whose firmest demands of members is that they address each other only in Arabic, and that foreigners seeking to communicate in other languages be ignored. Now I ask in a puzzled way, "The war is over. Can't we talk about it? Is it a secret?" "Over. . . ." His face, dark with passion, comes closer to mine. "The war is not over. . . . We do not talk of that war. We talk of the next. The *Jihad*." Although this was the only time during my stay in Egypt that I experienced hostility, the "black-out" suggested by the man's attitude to the war accounts for the feeling of discomfort sometimes experienced here by Westerners.

Nasser himself does not escape fantasies of omnipotence. When Zara comes into my hotel room one day, she is astonished to find that I am reading his *Philosophy of the Revolution* (1952), and remarks enthusiastically that I am a "student." After she has gone I finish the booklet.

> When I now try to recall the details of our experience in Palestine [Nasser wrote], I find a curious thing. We were fighting in Palestine, but our dreams were centered in Egypt. Our bullets were aimed at the enemy in his trenches before us, but our hearts hovered over our distant country which we had left to the care of the wolves.

Nasser goes on to say that he felt his comrades and himself "thrust treacherously into a battle for which we were not ready." If his profound attachment to Egypt has been responsible for his power over the *fellahin*, over the Zaras and Menas, in retrospect, Nasser's essential lack of perspective weighs against him. He describes how he had often chanted as a child, when an airplane flew overhead: "*Ya' Azzez. Ya' Azzez. Dahiya takhud al-Inglez*" (Oh Almighty God. Disaster overtake the English); and had only afterward learned that his forebears had used a similar cry against the Turks. Perhaps then he did not foresee that he himself would soon support the compulsive cry of "Disaster overtake the Israelis." And when he spoke of fighting on distant soil, he did not know that he himself would soon be supporting a messianic Pan-Arab role. Or that when he spoke of his fellow soldiers and himself being "thrust into a battle for which we were not ready," Egyptian soldiers might one day claim that it was under his guidance that they were thrust into a battle—the Six-Day War—for which they were not prepared.

* * *

As Louis Lomax, who visited Egypt in 1960, noted, there is something "dead and ancient" about Cairo. The city does give a feeling of profound stagnation; yet some change is obviously taking place, promising or not.

A government statistician in education and planning insists that the *fellahin* are better off because the lands formerly owned by the feudalists are now theirs. "Previously," he says, "95 per cent of the population owned 5 per cent of the land, and now 50 per cent of the population owns 50 per cent of the land—half the land is now in the hands of the peasants." Sitting in a green pajama-like costume and wearing sandals, he runs his long brown hands over his almost bare scalp. "Two or three years ago there was a rich class, but this class has been destroyed by our President. . . . Nasser has said that there are now new centers of force. Nasser says that the fuel of the capitalist machine was money, and that it was our duty to confiscate this money and render the capitalists harmless. Then we could avoid their evil; because these allies of feudalism were traitors and voluptuaries."

I found out later that if the peasant is granted five *feddans* of land, these are generally invested in a large cooperative where his own land is scarcely identifiable, and is worked in areas of cotton or sugar, and by gangs just as in the old days. He now has to pay for fertilizer which was formerly provided by the landlord; and since the crops are bought by the government, he is left without choice of market and may have to wait for his profits for long months after harvest. Not too long ago there were riots in some villages because of these delays.

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I ask if everyone—including the poor—now gets enough to eat, or is the Revolution being built, as other revolutions have been built, upon the lives of the poor. (I have seen the poor and undernourished in the streets of Cairo, have heard the current joke that the peasants own the land, the workers own the factories, and Nasser owns everything.) The statistician admits that there are people who are hungry; but he says that before the Revolution, Egypt had been like Saudi Arabia, on the same level, now at least there is the Aswan Dam, more hospitals and schools. There is no doubt, he says, that the 1952 land reform was a splendid gift to the long-neglected *fellahin* (the word comes from *falaha,* to labor) since some of the confiscated land income has gone to new owners and since the fixing of land rents has given a slight security. However, a great class remains exploited. Oversupply has made it difficult to enforce the minimum wage for agricultural workers; and the extension of rural health has only exacerbated this problem. The *fellahin,* inheritors of a way of life which has lasted for thirty centuries, have changed their masters, their religion, their language, their crops, but have remained themselves resistant and receptive. There is always production; and this production is a monument to the patience of earth-bound workers who still keep to a Coptic calendar which goes back to the time of the Pharaohs.

A professor from the university who is in a good position to know about the government's difficulties tells me that the essential problem (that old problem of would-be-socialist governments) is one of production. "Consumption is rising every day, just as the birthrate is rising, and production is declining. One cannot share what does not exist. Many grandiose schemes have just not worked." "It is said that a large private sector remains and figures are given to prove this; but the truth is that nearly all privately-owned businesses are either *directly* or *indirectly* controlled by the civil-service departments. There is a bureaucratic stranglehold over everything active. It's true that there are a number of buildings still privately owned, but then buildings don't produce. . . ." "As for the *fellah,*" he says, and his mobile Coptic face has a certain sad weariness, "all the laws are on paper. Human labor is cheaper than machines. The *fellah* still lives on flat bread, beans and onions, still wears his cotton robe and goes barefoot most of the time . . . if someone pays £3 a month to look after his house and garden, in any rural town for instance, that man then sends out his five-year-old daughter to pick cotton at five piasters a day. The law says that children can go to school, but there is no force behind this law."

Again I ask about hunger. "Many still starve," he says. "I should say that a great many more have an unbalanced diet . . . how can progress be made with continuous military adventures? Small children are still used as servants." I myself remember having seen, in the garages late at night, small boys who might be ten or eleven, changing tires, their faces black with grease. And later I see shops in the *souks,* where pale-faced boys of about the same age are perched on stools, and patiently tying threads in brilliant hand-woven carpets.

AT A SMALL club-restaurant on the third floor of a building facing the Nile, where I often eat in the company of other foreigners and those few Egyptians who like to keep in touch with them, I also hear about living conditions. Sometimes I share lunches of cheese, salad, wine, and coffee with a teacher from a technical school who is vague and oblique in his own conversation—"That club is crawling with spies," an army officer told me later—but is more interested in specific information from others. At night I often have dinner with an American Orientalist who had been in and out of Cairo for fifteen years and seems to combine a passion for modern Egypt with a passion for Islamic studies. "I was for the Revolution myself," he says, "and about six years ago I felt that the new ideas were really going to take hold . . . it looked promising." He pauses to polish his spectacles. "Yes, Nasser was sincere and devout. You can see the grayish water towers and the little white health centers standing out as symbols of the new times. But it wasn't consistent. After the Yemen adventure, when millions were squandered, you couldn't even get rice or onions. They had to be imported. . . . The slogans ceased to work as slogans do; birth control failed miserably, and now the country is being inundated by its own fertility. . . . They're talking about raising the legal age for marriage to eighteen but they'd better hurry. I think about a million new children are born each year. Production is falling back and the population simply can't support itself on this strip of land. . . ."

This American reminds me of a type I am to meet all over the world; one of those numerous modest and competent types, not only scholarly but with a certain pragmatic know-how; able to see the difference between what really exists and what exists on paper. Such men seem not caught up in the emotional chauvinism or the ideological hang-ups so common to their host countries. "I assure you I wanted it all to succeed. I was really enthusiastic, I used to give up my weekends to tutor village boys . . . but you can't help seeing the general breakdown. Elevators don't work, cables collapse. Buses, generators, etc. give up the ghost, and it's so hard to get parts that defeatism sets in, and then the machinery isn't even inspected. . . . I must say the mechanics are amazingly skillful, especially with cars. Last week I saw a '56 Pontiac and it had scarcely any of its original parts. The regime is trying hard to control the economy so that it can get reserves of hard cur-

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rency; this means they can't import Western goods. But the cure is worse than the disease. Services are also limited. They say that the postal officers are so poorly and irregularly paid that they'll rip the stamps off parcels. It's said that the Minister of Posts decided that salaries must be paid promptly, or one couldn't be sure that things would reach their destination. . . . There is a misplaced ideological fanaticism. The government is cutting its own throat. Tourism has died." He looks at me and laughs. "As Kipling said, 'The tourist is a dog, but he comes at least with a bone in his mouth, and a bone that many people pick.' This industry was one particularly suitable for Egypt. But, alas, tourists are not happy with ideologies; now even the Egyptologists are scared away."

We talk of the Arabs and the Copts. I comment on the charm of the Egyptians in general, both those of Arabic and those of Coptic ancestry. "The Copts are particularly graceful and sympathetic," he agrees, "whereas some of the desert Arabs are harsher and more aggressive. But in general one knows that the Egyptians have lived in this valley for thousands of years; that hospitality has been bred into them. This is why the tourist was happy here." I ask about bureaucracy and he tells me I should look into the *moassessa*. "That's a civil-service department. They manage everything, schools, hospitals, all organizations and establishments. Because of the wars they often have inadequate budgets, and when one of the departments in a *moassessa* shows a profit, they balance it against what's in the red. There's still a lot of *wasta* used. That's 'influence.' And then there is a coming and going in these departments that is unbelievable." I ask how the general attitude is to the outsider. "Well . . .," he hesitates, "there's a kind of fretful irritation. . . . Any dealings with the government lead to frustration. You go from office to office . . . it's Oriental bureaucracy at its worst." I suggest that there is a psychological need to be punitive to foreigners, the revenge on colonials. We begin to laugh, and having made our way through grilled fish from Alexandria, Greek salad with feta and olives, ice cream with fresh mangoes, we order the small cups of sweet coffee. The Orientalist is not sure that there will be more political repression, but he is uneasy because he has had his letters censored. "Some people have correspondence photostated. In my case I hope it is only the search for currency violations. . . . I'd hate to leave here. For all the irritation, it's the center of the literary world for me. My subject is early Arab literature, that is the 8th century. One is well-placed here, and I can get to Baghdad and sometimes to Teheran, where I've been making comparisons with Persian folk poetry."

ALTHOUGH THERE are now more emancipated women in Cairo, although the traditional black *mileyah* and the white *yashmak* are seen less often, the position of lower-class women still seems to remain medieval. The professor tells me that women have custody of children only until they are about ten or eleven. After that, by law, they belong to the father. The mother gets nothing—except as "guardian of the child." And the Orientalist complains, "You can't really meet women in this society, or not in my experience. The middle-class wife and daughter is too protected."

The waiter at one of the hotels talks on a slightly different level of women who are engagé. He has splendid almond eyes set in fat golden cheeks; but wears, with his black suit, an exceedingly grimy white front and tie. He talks of some women who are important in the new unions for women; and then he declares, out of the blue, as if I might get two kinds of women mixed up, "Sahara City, only third-class women there." I try to find out whether the Revolution has much changed women's lives.

"Here in this hotel I know many kinds of women and I talk to you like an international," he contributes. "First, I like the Italian . . . zen the Egyptian . . . zen the Greece. . . ." Earnestly he goes through the list, but as he realizes that I am not interested in sexual preferences, he acknowledges that the Egyptian woman still does not have much liberty. "The rich woman has enough. The medium woman sometimes; but the poor family woman no . . . she cannot to dance . . . she cannot to drink . . . she goes outside with mother or sister." He insists on trying to explain the female role in the life of the Egyptian male. "We must have women. The Egyptian man about sex is very strong . . . we feel to the woman but not 100 per cent. If I am married I will feel to my wife, but not the whole feeling." I gather that he is trying to tell me that "unfaithfulness" is an institution; and his tone suggests that this is quite natural, that male sensuality must be served—as per the patriarchal promise in the Koran ("I shall lay on no man a burden greater than he can bear"). There follows a series of stories about clandestine affairs and about lovers hidden in cupboards and women in towers—all sounding vaguely as if they might have come out of the Arabian Nights.

And near the Pyramids, Mena and Zara give *their* version of domestic life. On popular songs, Zara says that she "likes very much 'Strangers in the Night Exchanging Glances.'" On family duty Mena says, "It is forbidden to kiss and if he makes so"—she pantomimes the embracing of her own statuesque body—"then my father will beat me, or kill me, and put me *under the ground.*" An ancient savagery toward women still lingers on in many Muslim communities. William Lane describes how in the mid-19th century he saw a woman with a blue cross tattooed on her arms, paraded on a donkey, then taken in a boat into the river, stripped, strangled, and thrown in; this

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was presumably because she had dared to become a Christian. I have little opportunity to speak to middle-class women, but Mena and Zara both agree that there is "one law men and one law women," and seem to concur in the idea that women are inferior. Zara explains, "I can't go lonely . . . if you invite me to the United States I must come with my mother. . . . If I go with boy friend to a birthday party my family must go with me. Because nature prevents that girls go alone. I am weak and must go with my mother, father, brother, friends. . . . *Parce que c'est défendu que la femme sorte seule.*"

OUTSIDE THE HOTEL, bougainvillaea blooms lavishly, but is drained of some of its color in the heat. A strange flower with an elongated yellow cup attracts a strange bird with an orange crest; and the man who cleans the pool regards it passively as he pauses in his task of scooping leaves off the surface of the water. His blackish skin is tight over the bones of his limbs, and enormous fine eyes shine out of a hollow-cheeked face. "I get £15 a month and £6 goes for my board. . . . Yes, I am working here for thirty-five years. Oh, it was better before, more money, more people, a better life. Europeans then, British, Dutch, French. Since the Revolution it is worse . . . worse. The government deducts taxes and half of what I have over goes for my mother and children in the village. Yes, we have land, but it is little return and my brother farms it. . . . I have nothing." He makes a gesture toward his loose blue cotton garment. Although he is dark, he says that he is not a Nubian. In line with an old tradition, there are many Nubians employed in the hotels, their dark skins, sometimes with scarifications, contrast with brilliant uniforms. The hairdressers are, in general, Greeks. One of these smiles in a cynical way as he laments the past. His worn-out equipment in the rather gloomy little tiled room is balanced by his devotion to the art of hairdressing. "Nasser may be good for the Egyptians, but for us no good. Many go away because nothing much happens here. . . . It is all dead . . . not tourists . . . not Egyptian travelers. They tell you the wintertime is busy but this is not true, there are only a few more people than now. I have the wife of my brother in Canada and I have my cousin in Melbourne. In a year perhaps I will go too. . . ."

From the roadside the afternoon light shines upon an eternal scene. Shadows are cast like tiny dimples on the sandhills bordering the desert. There are convolutions on the roof of the camel shed, the classic folds in the hanging robes and cloths, a thrust-back of shadow from the camels themselves, and the little yellow carriages lined up for business. Closer, one sees the ubiquitous flies, the swaying camel tails, and the knots and tangled bark in the massive, dusty eucalyptuses. There is the rich sickening odor of manure mixed with garbage. Everything here lies under the shadow of the Pyramids, as in Mexico it lies under the giant Aztec monuments topped with their sacrificial altars; there is the same faintly oppressive feeling, the same weight of a history which seems too heavy to be adequately balanced by the present. "Camel meat," suggests the old man who calls himself a sheik and who is slapping his chest playfully, "it give the body a good powerful." He stands with dignity in his brown *galabiya*, his spotless white headcloth, his folded hands showing the gold of his signet ring and watch. He has the fine curved nose and high color of the desert Arab. "I used to work for the British one time. . . . I saw Anthony Eden. He shook my hand. I longa time British people, longa time . . . a big contractor with them longa time ago." He says that when the British were in power, he was a child in Cairo. "A young boy with the British . . . for sixteen years I am working with them when they doing maneuvers in the desert. I have a lot of camel then. Six thousand camel. . . ."

He takes me to see his son, who is fat, round-faced, dark-eyed, and leans over the counter of a little shop which sells ivories, alabaster, and brilliantly-woven carpets. The son is fierier than his mild father, but one feels that he is also less competent. "I think the war will stop," the father says hopefully, "I think it will stop from God." "We will fight," the son insists, his dark eyes flashing, "we will fight for Nasser. My father is old and doesn't know much." He shakes his fat arms, his chest, and beats his legs under the counter. "My legs for Nasser. . . . My arms for Nasser. . . . My blood for Nasser!"

Uneasily I hear the implacable tone, that word "blood" so often a motif in the rhetoric of the Arab states. "The objective of our war's present struggle is to liquidate . . . Israel by means of a bloody and long war. . . ." "Every Palestinian problem will be solved not by sentiments or pity but by struggle and blood." "Every Jew is bad, the only good Jew is a dead Jew." "Our masses have already thrown away the Security Council Resolutions and believe that only the language of fire will realize their objectives." Outside the shop I see the farmers going by in their long robes. I know that as they walk, a continuous stream of such messianic language pours from the transistors which they hold against their credulous ears.

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The needed changes, including those in the images by which military and foreign policy are shaped, all involve the sensibilities and concerns of the mind. Their natural, although by no means exclusive, interest therefore is to those who are called intellectuals. The largest number of intellectuals with an occupational identification are those in the educational and scientific estate. It is to the educational and scientific estate, accordingly, that we must turn for the requisite political initiative. The initiative cannot come from the industrial system, although support can be recruited from individuals therein. Nor will it come from trade unions. Apart from their declining numbers and power, they are under no particular compulsion to question the goals of the industrial system or the tendency to make all social purpose identical with these goals.

The first duty Galbraith addresses to his political intellectual is to promote the dismantling of the Defense Establishment. His ultimate objection to the military-industrial complex is not to its incredible wastefulness, its indifference to public pressures, or the generally conservative influence it exerts on our foreign policy. (These points are all made, of course.) The basic fault with the Defense Establishment is quite simply that it is no longer necessary. It is not justified by any real external threat, but rather by "bureaucratic truth"—the self-justification of those whose interests require that a mammoth, lavishly-financed apparatus be perpetuated.

The reasoning behind this opinion is again explained in *The New Industrial State*. Just as modern economic requirements are creating and empowering a more benevolent technostructure in the United States, the same forces are at work in the Soviet Union: "This convergence between two ostensibly different industrial systems occurs at all fundamental points. This is an exceedingly fortunate thing. In time, and perhaps in less time than may be imagined, it will dispose of the notion of inevitable conflict based on irreconcilable difference."

THESE THREE assumptions—that the contemporary intellectual is naturally endowed with a socially benign temperament; that modern technology is creating a new economic class of managers and technicians which will follow the intellectuals' leadership in putting the commonweal above corporate and personal gain; and that the same trends are inevitably mellowing the Communist world—are the faith, hope, and charity which nurture Galbraith's proposals for the Democratic party.

There is a great deal that could be said about this political perspective on a theoretical plane. It has much in common with a current in socialist thought which was strongest during the early vigor of industrial capitalism. The Comte de St. Simon, founder of a school of French social thought in the early 19th century which was one of the first to use the term socialism, envisioned a society guided by the masters of the new technology of his age, whom he called the *industriels*. These were not so much the capitalists themselves as the engineers, managers, scientists, and organizers of the nascent economic order of his day. Most of St. Simon's *industriels* ended up either as cranks or the organizers of vast capitalistic projects, such as the Suez and Panama Canals. St. Simon's *industriels*, despite their initial culture and idealism, ended up as servants of private wealth and their own narrow self-interest, and it is most likely that Galbraith's technostructure, if no wider responsibilities are imposed on it by the larger public, will follow the same course. It may be that the new corporate officialdom will get religion, but it is far safer to look for a more democratic basis for the transformation of society. This, of course, is what led Marx and Engels to reject St. Simonism—after the less benign qualities in capitalism had become apparent—and to develop a strategy for socialism based on the working class and its popular allies.

It is also fair to question Galbraith's optimism about the trends in Soviet society. The currents in Soviet life on which the convergence theory was so largely based have petered out in the past year or so. Liebermanism, the introduction of market mechanisms into the Soviet economy, is no longer very popular among the commisars—if anything, the present trend is toward a reintroduction of the centralism and labor discipline of the Stakhanov period. Ota Sik, the Czech economist whose economic reforms were regarded by convergence theorists as prime evidence for their predictions, now writes in exile, his accomplishments obliterated by Soviet tanks.

All this is quite relevant to Galbraith's strategy for the Democratic party. His theories naturally led him to his role in the New Politics movement —that collection of liberals and radicals drawn largely from academic and professional backgrounds which is seeking to take the leadership of the Democratic party away from both the conservative Southerners and urban machines, and the "bread-and-butter" liberals—the trade unions, and the traditional ethnic blocs. To the extent that any force in American politics embodies the interests of the new intelligentsia, this does—or at least is attempting to. This is the movement which has declared total war on the Defense Establishment. Yet, in spite of Professor Galbraith's eloquent suggestion, it has shown little interest in a radical, egalitarian economic program, or in whatever forces in our society might be rallied to promote such a program. The living political movement which Galbraith supports and in many ways speaks for shows no sign of adopting his domestic platform. And the groups which have endorsed programs reasonably close to his are very much at odds with the New Politics.

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The only significant, organized force in American political life which has spoken out for an economic program like Galbraith's is the trade-union movement. Yet while he is now willing to accept the unions in his reformed party, Galbraith expects them obediently to follow a more enlightened leadership. They are the hod carriers; the liberal intellectuals, the architects. Not much is said about the blacks, but apparently they are expected to accept a comparable status. Yet history and the coming election, about which something should be said, give compelling evidence that this will not succeed. The blacks want their own organization, their own spokesmen, and, as the phrase has it, their own role in making the decisions which affect their lives. And while it may not be commonly recognized, many workers want the same thing; there is a working-class consciousness which has many parallels with black consciousness, and the union leaders function as its spokesmen. The rank-and-file worker will not accept Galbraith as his spokesman any more than the average black would. Nor will he allow Galbraith to choose his spokesmen for him, least of all on the spurious criterion that those leaders who fail to honor the Professor's views are "geriatric." This is not just a matter of status jealousy on the workers' part or a grasping for some trivial recognition. The affluent liberals do not fully understand the needs of the workers and the blacks, do not know how to mobilize them for political action, and cannot be wholly trusted to defend their interests. The evidence in this year's election campaigns alone is sufficiently convincing.

GALBRAITH'S CASE becomes even weaker as it moves from his opinions on who should lead the Democrats to the program on which they should run. His two chief proposals, aside from his economic aims—which he never presents in hard programmatic terms, but rather as the more long-range objectives toward which we must move—are the disestablishment of the military-industrial complex and the reform of Congress.

There is not too much to be said on his foreign-policy views, because they are remarkably simple. The Communist threat is a deception and ". . . there is little the United States can do and little that it needs to do to influence the political events in Asia, Africa, or Latin America . . . in consequence of our presence, any disaster we now know will most likely be made worse." Coupled with his program for curtailing U.S. productivity, which would prevent us from giving substantial non-military assistance to foreign countries through economic-aid programs and technological assistance, this is about the most forthright statement of a neo-isolationist position that has yet been put forward in American politics.

The neo-isolationist position has some appeal. It spares one the difficulties—moral and intellectual—of proposing alternatives to the conservative and wasteful international policies of the cold-war era, alternatives which might offer the peoples of the world some hope of escaping both from totalitarian regimentation and the awful swamp of backwardness. It enables one to wash one's hands of dangerous situations, such as that in the Middle East. Yet leaving aside such old-fashioned moral considerations, the stance also has doubtful political value.

Should the Democratic party acquiesce in such policies, it would soon lose the allegiance of important groups which have strong feelings about one or another area of world conflict where complete U.S. disengagement would bring on disaster —the Jews, for example. It would lose those working-class and middle-class voters who, lacking Galbraith's cultivated detachment, are unhappy when powerful movements and governments spring up even in remote quarters of the world which defile and threaten their country and its more or less democratic way of life. It requires unusual effort to develop the conviction that Communist powers will stand by graciously while the U.S. retires to build socialism in one country, à la Galbraith. The Communist powers are indeed divided among themselves, and far from ignoring this, U.S. policymakers have been frantically and opportunistically trying to exploit the division almost since the moment it occurred. But the differences among the Communist powers are over which has the better strategy for extending the Communist domain. About the ultimate objective they are, so to speak, polylithic. A thorough U.S. disengagement would surely set off an international crisis that would have disastrous consequences for those, among others, whose policies produced it.

TO DESCRIBE Galbraith's foreign-policy views as dangerously naive would be to employ a favorite cliché of the hawks. Consequently this description should be reserved for his proposals for Congressional reform. Here he argues that the seniority system of selecting Congressional committee chairmen has enthroned the reactionary Southern Democrats, and that their power must be broken. This has long been recognized by some liberal legislators, chief among them Congressman Richard Bolling, whose efforts have produced a reform bill for the House of Representatives over which a major fight is brewing. It is hoped that the bill will contain provisions which would undermine the strength of the Southern conservatives without, on the other hand, permitting the Nixon Republicans to gain a firm hold over the only branch of government which has so far remained beyond their grasp.

Galbraith's solution has a stunning simplicity. Simple, in that he urges Democrats merely to vote to allow the Republicans to organize the House. Stunning, in that, if his proposal were adopted, it

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would not only replace conservative Democratic committee chairmen with conservative Republicans, but would displace a number of liberal and moderate Democratic chairmen as well; anyone who cares to look at a Congressional Directory can confirm this. More important, it would allow the Republicans to stack key committees with conservatives, creating conservative majorities. Should this happen liberal legislative proposals would never even get a hearing; there would be infinitely less opportunity to rally public opinion in fights for decent social legislation; and the Republican administration could completely take the lead in setting national policy—with a full-scale attack on the labor movement and other genuinely troublesome elements as the first item on its agenda.

II

GALBRAITH IS pressing to widen the wrong kind of division in American politics—a division within the Democratic party between middle-class liberals and the black and trade-union movements. Samuel Lubell, on the other hand, is pleading for an impossible unity. Lubell's standpoint seems remarkably close to that of the liberal Republicans—John Lindsay, John Gardner, Charles Percy, and, of course, Nelson Rockefeller—with whom he has had some association. While Galbraith's New Politics movement is trying to wrangle the leadership of the Democratic party away from labor and the minorities, the liberal Republicans are groping for some outlet for their own energies. Their prospects in the Republican party are dim, but not entirely hopeless. They see a possibility that some of the corporate stockholders in the Republican party will become disillusioned with the divisive consequences of Nixon's Southern strategy, and will either dump him or leave the party. (Perhaps they could join the New Politics forces in the Democratic party, with whom they have so much in common?) They appeal to the underprivileged to moderate their protests and to the affluent to "give a damn," hoping that race, class, and ethnic identity can be set aside, in (to use the name Gardner has given to his new movement) a "Common Cause."

Lubell's earlier book, *The Future of American Politics*, was an insightful analysis of the conservative-liberal, Republican-Democratic polarization that had been building up in American politics since the urban immigrants began to dominate the Democratic party in the 1920's. The book, published just before the 1952 election, was, in effect if not intention, a suggestion to liberal Republicanism, which had before it the carte blanche of the Eisenhower administration, to work toward fashioning a lasting political majority on the order of the Roosevelt coalition. But in the decades since Eisenhower took office, the Republican party, contrary to Lubell's inclination, has settled more thickly and uniformly into the mold of conservatism.

The crucial reason for this has been that the well-to-do backers of the party are unwilling to accept the social programs, the levels of taxation, and the kind of regulation of the economy that they would have to tolerate to gain a broad and stable base among middle- and working-class voters. This is not ideological rigidity on their part—it makes fairly good political sense. The economic powers in this country are not desperate to control government—they simply need to frustrate it. In one sense, their participation in politics is only half-serious. They are less concerned about conservatives winning elections than they are about preventing the liberal forces from winning the kinds of victories that might enable them to carry through a rational and egalitarian program for regulating the economy. Because of this, the economic powers do not feel under much obligation to make serious concessions even to Richard Nixon. They will not, for example, accept a program of price and profit constraint which would enable Nixon to control inflation. On the other hand, they are not enthusiastic about drastic race policies which, though they might allow Nixon to tighten his hold on the Southern and backlash vote, would contribute to social turmoil and the financial burdens on Northern cities.

The big-business forces were sobered by the Goldwater debacle in 1964. The Johnson landslide produced a liberal majority which in due course might have trespassed on the sanctums of the private economy. This gave great impetus to the Nixon campaign, which neither conceded too much to the kooky, populistic reactionaries, nor made any serious commitments to the spending needed to satisfy the ever more militant demands of the blacks, the organized workers, or the disaffected intellectuals. Yet despite the cleverness of the Nixon strategy, only the positively Sicilian feuds among the liberal groups themselves made his victory possible.

Since the inclinations of Nixon's corporate backers made it difficult for him to propose major social programs of any kind, he won the election largely on the basis of an "anti" vote. He naturally enough is trying to consolidate this vote into a durable majority. He has, in the main, followed Kevin Phillips's strategy of wooing the South, the Middle States, and the suburbs with anti-black, anti-radical, anti-crime, and related appeals. He has had to rely on rhetoric to do this, because in order to keep his anti-spending constituents happy he is prevented from undertaking major new social programs, even of an essentially conservative kind, such as a large-scale anti-crime program. (His Family Assistance Program, which incorporates some new and attractive ideas for replacing welfare with a guaranteed minimum income, is the one exception.)

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This is not a terribly comfortable situation for the Nixon administration. For one thing, its successes are largely dependent on the failures of liberalism, especially those which stir active resentment among normally Democratic voters. For another, every gesture made toward one or another form of backlash creates difficulties for those Republican officeholders with essentially liberal constituencies. This accounts for the repeated Republican defections over such matters as the Supreme Court nominations and the Presidential vetoes of essential appropriations bills. Republican liberals are in an awkward predicament. Charles Goodell, who is running for reelection, is frantically appealing to the Democratic antiwar vote while at the same time defending the administration's domestic policies. Mark Hatfield has propounded the curious theory that unless Nixon is supported Ronald Reagan will take the Presidency away from him—as though that were a likely alternative. Javits, Percy, Finch, Rockefeller, Brooke—all are struggling to get a steady footing on that thin margin of liberalism that has been permitted in Nixon's Republican party.

It would perhaps be more accurate to describe these men as moderates than as liberals, because they generally line up between the more aggressive, free-spending Democrats and the normally conservative Republicans. They naturally find themselves in a convenient situation for playing the role of conciliators. Because of their ultimate Republican bias, they are often led to couple the rhetoric of the liberals with voluntaristic, inexpensive, and gimmicky schemes that will be palatable to conservatives. This is the political strain which has given us the Urban Coalition's "Give a Damn" campaign, Lindsay's school decentralization program, black capitalism, and a variety of other generally inconsequential and sometimes dangerous diversions from the hard and invariably expensive solutions to major social problems.

It is somewhat surprising that *The Hidden Crisis in American Politics* ends in a plea for national unity and a homily on the need for the public to show patience in pressing its various demands. Lubell's interviewing provides him with two valuable perceptions which should have led to other conclusions. They are:

1) The backlash against the liberal approach to the race issue, which is often gratuitously ascribed to white racism, is actually quite different from that pathological fear and hatred of Negroes which typifies the white supremacy of the Deep South. Many of the lower-class whites whom Lubell interviewed—even those who voted for Wallace—did not oppose civil rights and expanded opportunities for blacks. Their opposition to the liberal approach to race was based largely on their indignation at rioting and the provocative rhetoric of black extremists, and their fears that Negro progress would be paid for at their expense—that is, that their neighborhoods, schools, and work places would be overwhelmed by large numbers of poor, uneducable, and hostile blacks.

2) The philistine affluence of the 60's, far from inducing self-satisfaction in those who partook of it, instead stimulated new and intense appetites. People now want more, and of a better quality; not just consumer items, but also government services. And they are jealous when they feel that one group (the blacks) are getting these services when they themselves are not.

The obvious implication of both these observations is that Lubell's "crisis" has a lot to do with economic matters, and its solution will require a reallocation of resources. It is this not-too-subtle point which intrudes on reveries about national unity. It may be that a national consensus can be achieved on such matters as opposition to the use of violence, commitment to the democratic process, concern for legal equality for the Negro, or the need to protect our natural environment. But there is not likely to be any unity over the basic allocation of wealth in our society. The problems of the cities have grown too severe, and the expectations of the have-nots—black and white—have risen beyond anything the haves are willing to concede. Economic growth dividends and funds trimmed from the defense and Vietnam war budgets are not adequate to meet these needs. Some real concessions both in corporate power and in personal incomes must be made, and they will not be made willingly.

The truly hidden crisis in American politics about which Lubell might have spoken is this steadily mounting conflict over the uses and distribution of America's wealth. No major spokesman of American liberalism has yet addressed himself in full candor to this issue, which is, in one form or another, likely to be central to the politics of the coming decade. The 1970 election campaigns have already demonstrated that liberalism must again give priority to economics if it hopes to recapture the ground lost in the last few years.

III

BY ALMOST any reasonable standard the Nixon administration and its allies should be vulnerable this year. Mid-term elections usually result in some losses for the party in power, even when it has a creditable record. This administration, however, has few accomplishments to run on, even in the eyes of its own constituents. Obviously, blacks have little reason to be pleased with the Nixon record. High unemployment, the credit squeeze, and unyielding inflation have assured that the Republicans can make no inroads into the labor vote on the basis of any accomplishment in the economic field. But

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there is not even much for the more conservative voter. The administration's pledges to fight crime do not appear to have reduced one's chances of being mugged or burglarized, nor have the more lucrative and business-like forms of crime shown signs of any recession. The Vietnam war still throbs—although perhaps not so intensely as before. Hartford and Asbury Park proved that ghetto violence is not just a by-product of a Democratic administration. And—a matter of some importance—Nixon has not been able to bring his supporters what many of them seem to have wanted most: a sense of stability, security, and the bland optimism of the Eisenhower years. Drugs, smut, and violence still abound. The problems of the cities, the environment, and education still seem inexplicably beyond control. Middle America is still haunted by confusion and, at times, by a twinge of panic.

It is remarkable that in the face of such opportunity the question in this election is not the likely extent of Republican losses, but rather whether the Democrats can hold on to what they have. That this should be so is a measure of the lingering divisions among liberal Democrats which brought about their defeat in 1968.

It would be foolish to try to predict the election results, especially with the great swing in public opinion in the closing days of the '68 campaign as evidence of the change that could occur between this writing and November 3. But enough is clear about both the early events in this year's campaigns and at least some aspects of the situation that candidates will face in the closing weeks of the election to permit some observations on the Congressional races.

The first such observation is that the new peace politics has not had auspicious success. The New Politics forces opened their election effort with a great gnashing of teeth shortly after President Nixon ordered the troops into Cambodia. Perhaps they can claim success in forcing limitations on that undertaking which otherwise would not have been observed. Even so, their exertions have not contributed much to the election of liberals. The troops are out of Cambodia now, further troop reductions in Vietnam are apparently in the works, and the bewildering variety of movements, committees, and projects which were created in response to the Cambodian invasion are now left without much of an issue. If anything, the President may have benefited by his prudent management of the Cambodian situation, and further agitation about it could create a measure of public resentment.

The Vietnam war, of course, remains an issue. Perhaps in some races it could, if carefully handled, be used effectively against conservatives. The evidence is, however, that it is not being handled well, and that those who are still making Vietnam their issue are producing as much confusion as anything else.

In contrast to the situation in 1968, the peace and domestic-change wings of liberalism are not inevitably pitted against one another this year. A large number of the Democratic legislators who hold one or another anti-war position are also staunch liberals on domestic issues. This is especially true in this year's Senate races, where with few exceptions the candidates given highest priority by AFL-CIO COPE, the UAW, and the civil-rights organizations are also important doves. The Senate is also the more critical battleground of the two houses of Congress: a loss of seven Democratic seats will give the Republicans a majority. The Republicans are concentrating on Senate campaigns, as is the labor movement. One would think that the peace movement would share this priority—the Senate is the branch of Congress with the greatest influence in foreign affairs.

Ideally, from every standpoint the most effective strategy for all wings of the liberal movement would have been to join in an effort to elect a liberal Senate. (With one exception—Gale McGee—the Senatorial candidates getting the greatest help from the labor movement are doves.) Yet the strategy of the New Politics movement has been to concentrate on its own favorites, regardless of their importance to the larger political picture, and in a manner completely independent of—and occasionally in conflict with—the other major liberal blocs. This is difficult to explain, even from the point of view of those whose sole concern is an early end to the Vietnam war.

There are some races in which the anti-war movement has conducted spoiler campaigns. In Wyoming, a primary candidate was run against McGee who, though announced as an opponent of the war, had a markedly conservative record on domestic affairs. Since the anti-war candidate had no chance of winning, the net result of his candidacy could only have been to weaken McGee in his race against a strong Republican opponent, who is both a conservative and a hawk. A few thousand votes could make the difference in the election.

Hubert Humphrey is in a less difficult situation, since he will probably carry Minnesota by a comfortable margin. Only spitefulness can explain the support given by the anti-war movement to Earl Craig, his primary opponent: Humphrey has adopted a far more dovish position since the 1968 campaign.

Such examples are only one index of a narrow approach to the election in the anti-war movement. Another is its sense of priorities. The defeat of Ralph Yarborough in the Texas Democratic primary was one of the most painful losses liberalism could have suffered in this election. While most of the anti-war groups within the state worked hard for Yarborough, and he had considerable assistance from national labor sources, there is little evidence that he got the

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same kind of help from the national leadership of the peace movement.

Perhaps the reason the New Politics movement did comparatively little in the Yarborough campaign is that at the time more exciting things were going on elsewhere. In California Ron Dellums, a black whose main campaign energies were drawn from the Berkeley campus, was cutting down Jeffrey Cohelan, a liberal and a dove whose only apparent fault was his uncertainty about the New Politics. As for the East Coast, the other center of the New Politics, there were —in addition to the New York primary circus— three campaigns by New Politics insurgents against incumbent Democratic liberals: the Kaden-Pattan campaign in New Jersey, and the Eichenberry-Rooney and Abzug-Farbstein campaigns in New York. All these drew great national attention, volunteer help from outside the districts, and impressive financial assistance. (It was reported that Bella Abzug raised $75,000 at one well-attended soirée, in the home of Barbra Streisand.*)

On the other hand, the truly crucial races— those to which liberal strength in the Senate is pinned—have not received the attention they deserve. There has not been much tangible support for the Gore campaign in Tennessee. Like Yarborough, Gore is not a New Politics man, despite his liberal and dovish views, and his campaign is stressing tax reform, Social Security reform, and other economic issues. There has been a decided reluctance among Illinois liberals to provide enthusiastic help for the campaign of Adlai Stevenson III, despite Stevenson's refusal two years back to yield to pressures from Mayor Daley to modify his anti-war position. Stevenson now has Daley's support, without which his chances of being elected would be helped by prayer far more than by any campaigning. Liberal hatred of Daley has carried over into a perverse disdain for Stevenson. Even Senate candidate Philip Hoff in Vermont, an early supporter of the McCarthy campaign, has not gotten the undivided support of the peace movement. Some of its more adamant sectors have instead backed William Meyer, a pure and simple anti-war candidate who threatens to oppose Hoff on a third-party ticket. Three other Democratic doves, Harrison Williams, Frank Moss, and Quentin Burdick, have the nominal support of the peace movement, but so far not too much besides.

ALL OF THESE candidates have received support from the AFL-CIO, despite what differences the unionists may have with their foreign-policy views. It is possible that, the primaries out of the way and the hard realities of the political situation somewhat clarified, greater cooperation among the liberal forces could be achieved. This would require, above all, that the peace liberals come to grips with two issues with which they have only fumbled so far: first, the economy; and second, crime and disorder.

The economic situation is not likely to improve much by November, despite all the frantic cheering by administration officials at every flutter of the economic indicators. There is widespread pubic dissatisfaction over high prices, unemployment, the high cost of credit, and even, in some sectors, the impact of the recession on business. And from a political standpoint there is as much to be harvested from the psychological effects of the economic decline on those who may not have yet been touched by its tangible damage—the poor, the working class, and middle-income groups whose expectations not just of stability but of some serious improvement in their way of life were lifted during the boom of the late 60's. Reaching these people requires more than a program for minor reforms, which seldom have much emotional grab, and often only affect a narrow segment of the populations to which they must appeal. Liberalism needs to stand for a comprehensive and dramatic economic program, which is stated in terms that the average voter can readily grasp. It should be added, however, that such a program must begin with many of the modest needs that the population currently feels. It cannot be an economic master plan, issued *de haute en bas,* in which such things as workers' demands for a fatter pay envelope are treated as impertinences. This is the Galbraithian stance.†

The importance of economic programs needs to be reemphasized in view of the growing interest some liberals are showing in the possibility of strengthening the liberal appeal to the lower-class white. This is generally taken to mean broadening social programs for helping blacks to include some direct benefits to whites as well,

* Much to its credit, the Universities National Anti-War Fund, one of the most significant of the peace politics groups, did not support Bella Abzug's primary campaign. While at times she may appear to be the New Politics answer to Abbie Hoffman, Mrs. Abzug deserves to be taken far more seriously. Her roots lie in the Old Left, rather than the new liberalism. Her commitment to ending the killing in Vietnam is so strong that she once argued with Paul O'Dwyer at a convention of the New Democratic Coalition over whether or not non-Communist South Vietnamese should be offered sanctuary in the U.S. in the event of a Communist victory. She held that such people deserve the "punishment" that awaits them.

† Galbraith tends to regard most industrial workers as overpaid, at the expense of those sectors of the population which are outside the industrial system—the poor, the old, the blacks, etc. One can infer that this explains his refusal to endorse last winter's strike by General Electric workers, whose average yearly earnings were well below the government figures for a "modest but adequate" income. Perhaps it did not occur to the Professor that whatever can be extracted from management in such circumstances is taken more from stockholders' dividends and managements' salaries than out of the mouths of the poor. Joe Duffy, whose active support of the GE strike may have helped him win the Connecticut Democratic primary, has an approach which is at once more humane and politically astute.

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taking firmer positions on crime, demanding better services for white urban areas, and giving greater recognition to the white ethnic groups whose support for liberalism has been slipping. These are, of course, all valid strategic ideas. Yet it is curious that an economic program is often omitted from such discussion.

One senses in this a view of the lower-income white as a potentially new political clientele, whose support can be won through ethnic appeals, concessions on matters of style, clever handling of the race issue, displays of backbone toward criminals, etc.—none of which costs much, or will scare off wealthy campaign contributors, or will require that any serious role be granted to the more independent representatives of the low-income groups.

Robert Kennedy was experimenting with this strategy in his 1968 campaign. The McCarthy version of the New Politics, which appealed to more conservative, suburban voters, became dominant after Kennedy's assassination, and interest in appealing to urban ethnic groups declined. Now that Nixon has staked out a good part of the affluent middle class as his own territory, the new liberals are being forced to reconsider the possible uses of the lower-income white.

Yet it is very unlikely that a liberal recovery can be bought simply by mining a new vein of sociology. The crime issue offers an example of the difficulties of this approach. There has recently been an outbreak of hard-line posturing by liberals on the crime issue: John Lindsay has made a militant speech on the subject, as has Hubert Humphrey. An article by Richard Scammon and Benjamin Wattenberg in the *New Republic* which advises liberal Democrats to try to turn anti-crime feeling against the Republicans has had wide circulation. This is in many respects to the good. It is disastrous when liberals take too literally the sentiments expressed in Eugene Debs's poetic phrase: ". . . so long as there is a criminal class, I am of it. . . ." Today the poor and working class are clearly the chief victims of crime, especially in its uglier forms. No one who hopes to help or represent them can take lightly their needs for adequate protection.

But it is also true that conservatives are in some respects better able to exploit the crime issues than liberals. Liberal principles prevent them from espousing anti-crime measures which infringe on civil liberties, are too harshly punitive, and so forth. Liberals also have a special difficulty now because the "crime" issue really encompasses some forms of disrespect for law which are essentially political, such as the conflict between the Black Panthers and the police, campus violence, and the Weatherman bombings. (It is entirely possible that some more affluent liberals will accept vigorous anti-crime measures against the blacks without recognizing the *politically* more damaging crimes of "the kids.") Such factors make it difficult for liberals fully to capture the crime issue; about all they can hope is to try to neutralize the conservatives' abilities to exploit it. This is true of most of the other issues which liberals can hope to use in appealing to lower-income whites. The exception, of course, is the economy. Only economic issues can give a cutting edge to a liberal strategy for recouping losses among lower-income whites.

The Democratic liberals may be able to put some new strategy into effect before the election. This will be difficult but it deserves to be tried. The political climate, partly because of the great emphasis on the peace issue, and partly because of the intellectual currents exemplified in Galbraith and Lubell, is not suited to such a shift. There are few staff people available for political campaigns who have sensitivity to the issues and the electorate toward which attention must be turned. The media, partly because of an ultimately conservative bias on class issues, are not likely to be much help. And it takes more than a short burst of political campaigning to reverse trends that have grown up over several years. Still, some important gains could be made—the swing to Humphrey late in the 1968 campaign shows that. Whatever is attempted could at least prepare the way for a more effective liberal campaign in the critical elections of 1972.

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Catharsis, Linguistics & All That

John Thompson

THEORIES OF POETRY afford us a curious minor example of European mental processes. For nearly twenty-five hundred years now, since the Greeks invented Poetics, our cultural forebears have been arranging and rearranging the three terms Plato used to describe the origin, nature, and function of Poetry, always placing them, just as Plato did, in relation to some larger proposition about humanity or perhaps divinity. For Plato, of course, what he said about the poet, the poem, and the audience all had to serve his own larger notion, which was that man should be rational. Since Poetry in its origin, nature, and function had little to do with reason, there could be no place for it in Plato's utterly rational visionary Republic. Poetry must be banned. After Plato, nearly everybody used his three terms for Poetry but nearly always they used them to escape his conclusion.

Aristotle began it. To quarrel with Plato, he had to agree with Plato's three main observations, just as everyone has more or less had to do since then. But Plato and Aristotle agreed about a great deal more than those three things. They could make two very large assumptions, taking these for all but granted, two assumptions that were tremendously important to the theory of Poetry and which nobody after them could ever again claim with the natural assurance these two philosophers enjoyed. First, it seemed to them as surely as the sun shines that Poetry was of the most central importance in human society.

We know perfectly well that this was true, for a while, in those ancient city-states. But things are so different for us that we can scarcely imagine how it was. Of course it was really over for Plato and for Aristotle too. The palmy days lay well behind them both. Pericles died before Plato was born, and he grew up in the long disastrous war. Sophocles and Euripides died as he came of age. And we are told that by Aristotle's time, in the 4th century, Poetry did not actually have anymore the place that he and Plato talked as if it had. It is as though Aristotle projected himself backward into the Golden Age too with the knowledge of how it all came out, as Plato did by saying everything through the mask of Socrates, who had been there. Still, the forms existed and the living memory; and we know how often we come to understand things only as we are losing them. But today, can even our most dedicated poets themselves really imagine an entire society convinced, as Werner Jaeger said the Greeks were, that Poetry is "the epitome of all knowledge and culture"?

Homer was more to the Greeks than the Bible has ever been to Jews or Christians. He was their history, their religion, their ethics, their mythology, their identity as a people, their duty and their pleasure. Far stranger to us than the lives of the bees, that life of 5th-century Athens which had as its very center the performances of the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. We have nothing like that. If we could roll up in one big blow-out, which literally everyone would attend, our old Fourth of July, our New Year's Eve, our Easter and Passover, our World's Series, our Woodstocks, our opera and our movies, and such other diverse and dispersed occasions of assembled celebration as we still have, then we might see a faint simulacrum of the festivals of Dionysus. We have, of course, television, our universal and solitary vice.

The second assumption shared by Plato and Aristotle also gave them a good reason for investigating Poetry. It seemed obvious to them that everything should be judged according to its beneficial or harmful effect on men and their society—and again in a way that we can understand in principle but can scarcely grasp in our imaginations, this assumption included a further and deeper one: that man is really unthinkable, undefinable, apart from his society. This, like the assumptions about Poetry, would have been sharpened for them by a sense of loss.

"And we may further grant to those of her defenders who are lovers of Poetry and yet not poets the permission to speak in prose on her behalf," so Plato had Socrates say to Glaucon. "Let them show not only that she is pleasant but also useful to States and to human life, and we will listen in a kindly spirit; for if this can be proved we shall surely be the gainers—I mean, if there is a use in Poetry as well as a delight?"

So they tried to account for Poetry in their peculiar categories of logic. As Plato and Aristotle thought about those few generations of splendor, they believed it necessary to examine

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it all as closely as they could. What is Poetry that it should be so bound up with the greatness of the *polis*? Today anyone writing about Poetics has to come at it on the opposite tack. What is Poetry? But how can we even ask questions seriously about something that is so utterly unminded in the mightiness of our Empire? Poets and Poetry have little more place with us than Plato would have given them in his Republic. We might even wonder if this could be so for reasons anything like his.

PLATO MADE three observations about Poetry. The poet works from inspiration, some resource that is not in the faculty of reason. The poem itself is an object that imitates other things. And third, the audience is affected emotionally by the poem. These seem very simple things to say, perhaps because we are all so used to them or perhaps because they must be true. Anyway, they have been elaborated and analyzed and interpreted all those twenty-five hundred years and we have not yet got around them. They are a terrible embarrassment to the idea of Poetry.

Plato thought that nothing a man did while he was out of his mind could be much good. Some of us now might in our desperation say just the opposite, rather as the Romantics did. Aristotle said only that Poetry indeed came from something other than reason. It came from a given condition, from instinct, basic human instinct. This source of inspiration was certainly not rational but it was not on that account bad either, and in operation it had certain incidental benefits for the poet, and received reinforcement from certain other feelings the poet had. Men just naturally have an instinct for imitation and for harmony. Today, of course, with our elaborate information and speculation about what besides reason occupies our minds, we have our own versions of the poet's inspiration.

Second, where Plato said that the poem itself is an imitation of something else, Plato certainly meant that an imitation is not as good as the real thing. He had complicated confirmations of this, in accordance with his various theories of knowledge and value. The noblest thing is pure Idea; there is even an Idea, for instance, of Bed, and any "real" bed in our world is but an imitation of that Idea. Pitiful, then, a bed in a poem, the mere copy of a copy. (How could he use Bed as his example, when this would surely have called to anyone's mind that veritable Ygdrasil, the great earth-rooted marriage bedstead of Odysseus and Penelope?) And an imitation of a man's actions is surely a much poorer thing than action itself. Who would choose to be an encomiast rather than the earner of encomia?

Aristotle could only agree that Poetry, like all art, is imitation. Since this is so, since imitation is the central fact of Poetry, it must be that the kinds of Poetry are defined by the objects they imitate, by the medium in which they imitate, and by the manner of imitation. Aristotle used chiefly Tragedy in his demonstration, and thus we learned most of what we can say about that noble mode. Of the six necessary parts of any tragedy, all of them imitations, plot is the most important, for this imitates the actions of men and then through this the "characteristic movement of fate" itself. Then we have character, diction, thought, spectacle, and song. And we are into criticism now. For, knowing these things, Aristotle can tell us the main things required for a good plot, reversal and recognition, and the various ways these can be organized; he tells us something about each of these six parts of tragedy, the MORIA, "constitutent elements," even a long section on diction and one on meter; and we are analyzing and judging *Oedipus Rex*, and *Antigone*, and the *Oresteia*, and we are even prescribing.

This critical analysis of course serves the main purpose of establishing a counter-statement to Plato. It argues for the inclusion of the minor term, Poetry, in the essential middle term that will connect Poetry with the major term, and the major term connects immediately with the proposition which both Aristotle and Plato can agree upon as that one subsuming all others: the good of man and State. The middle term is something like Noble Action, and doubtless what comes out is as inconclusive as what usually emerges when large and messy statements of value are run through the cogs of this small old Greek machine.

Noble action serves the purpose of man's life.

Tragedy is a kind of noble action.

∴ Tragedy serves the purpose of man's life.

Poetics has to be all this wide and airy in its general intention, and also at least as narrow as Aristotle is in trying to wedge that minor term into the grander view. Its arguments can never achieve that ideal tautology by which we are informed in "the mood of Barbara" that Socrates is a mortal. But the antique form does show us where the force of the argument has to be exerted, and seeing this, Aristotle put his heaviest work just there. Tragedy (and thus at least partly, through kinship, all Poetry) is a kind of noble action. Strictly of course he can really claim only that it is "like" a kind of noble action: and there we are again with imitation. Working out what imitation is took Aristotle beyond pure theory and into actual criticism. Since then we have gone back and forth with it. The idea of imitation dwindled for a long time into various precepts of what poets ought to imitate, chiefly the advice being that they should stick to copying certain approved poems. Others scorned the whole idea in favor of pure inspi-

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ration. In our century, imitation, mimesis, has reappeared in the dialogues of Poetics with something of the baffling potency of Aristotle's meaning.

Catharsis is the third term. Again. Aristotle agreed with Plato about the audience, just as he had about the poet and the poem. The audience is affected emotionally. Poetry feeds and waters the passions instead of letting them dry up as they might, and would let pleasure and pain be the rulers in our State, not law and the reason of mankind. Aristotle chose a different metaphor for the process and got different results. Tragedy certainly encourages the passions, he said, arousing pity and fear, but then, and this is the whole thing, "effecting the proper purgation of these emotions." Pity is aroused by unmerited misfortune, fear by the misfortune of a man like ourselves. That is about all we have on it, except that of course he thought this catharsis, this purification, very valuable. He said nothing at all about what kind of actual physical or mental processes might be involved. He went into considerable detail, though, about how a tragedy could best be formed to have this effect on the audience. His word KATHARSIS, like our translation of it, is a figure borrowed from the visceral for the mental, with what assumptions or implications we don't know, except that as we would guess, in the medicine of Hippocrates catharsis was good, it purified the body.

Again, like Inspiration and Imitation, Catharsis is today, if not in precisely this term then as this concept, quite back in circulation in Poetics.

II

As HE set out in Poetics, I. A. Richards, a young man, surveyed the twenty-five hundred years of efforts by critics, moralists, educators, and aestheticians to account for the arts, and found almost nothing of value. "Aristotle was at least as clearly and fully aware of the relevant facts and as adequate in his explanations as any later inquirers" (*Principles of Literary Criticism*, 1925). Longinus, Horace, Boileau . . . Wordsworth, Coleridge, Carlyle, Arnold . . . all the others, many of them among the first intellects of their ages, on this subject afforded at best some brilliant guesses and pregnant hints in a waste of odd conjectures, admonitions, confusions and whimsies, dogmas and crotchets.

At first Richards believed the answer lay in a comprehensive promotion of catharsis. With Plato's and Aristotle's noble assumption of concern for mankind he concurred; only if the arts, if Poetry, served the good of man were they justified. There was a generous urgency in Richards's view, too, more even in his first quarter of the 20th century than the two philosophers seemed to feel in ancient Athens following their great war. He doubted, in 1925, whether the world could survive another fifty years.

The arts, Poetry in particular, would serve the good of man by a kind of Catharsis, the new details of this to be supplied by then recent psychology and neurology; and these details, properly understood, might make art more widely and deeply effective. Poetry, he believed, has a special capacity for stirring up the reader's nervous system, from the eyes right through to the tiniest and tenderest neurons, vibrating exquisitely with our most unconscious appetites, urges, and sensations; and then Poetry has also the capacity to restore equilibrium to all this fine system. Without this exercise of the neurons, we cannot estimate true values or deal with changing conditions in the world.

This part of Richards's thought soon ceased to interest him all that much, and he realized that he like the others had added little to Aristotle on Catharsis. The supposed realignment of imputed neurological entities seemed to provide a ground for his large human concerns, but actually, as John Crowe Ransom said of this early stage of Richards's thought, it amounted to "an odd reduction of human consciousness. For when we have an elaborate mental experience it is the thoughts, images, emotions, and the like which constitute the 'hard facts,' if any, not the neural state; the latter, so far as observation goes, are only their inferences, and have to be improvised." Anyway, Richards was already turning from what I call this concern with Catharsis to a concern with Imitation—the object, medium, and manner of the poem's Imitation. He had found that even advanced students, candidates for honors in English in his university, students who had received the most expensive education available, could not tell what a poem was about. They could not construe: they could not perform the most elementary task of telling what the meaning or intention of a poem might be. Their attempts to go further and report on the values of the poem or even on their own feelings about it were a shambles; and, of course, with his concern for humanity, it seemed to Richards that this could only mean that these students, soon to be among the leaders of England, had for their whole understanding of the world nothing but a mental and emotional shambles.

Out of his efforts to correct these basic defects came his studies in the language of Poetry. He tried to make explicit and available for inspection various kinds of meaning in poems (Sense, Feeling, Tone, Intention), and how figurative language works—from this eventually came his famous terms *tenor* and *vehicle* for the two parts of metaphor, the subject and the figure. He classified Poetic Forms, and defined the various errors of Irrelevant Associations and Stock Re-

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sponses, Sentimentality and Inhibition, discussed Doctrine in Poetry. "Rhetoric, I shall urge, should be a study of misunderstanding and its remedies." Out of the many difficulties in explicitly construing came the sense that great poems often include what seemed to be contradictions, deep ironies, and these as it turned out were of the greatest value, they promote balance and reach a kind of truth otherwise unavailable, because they suppress nothing. From these ironies, these opposites, we come to whole multiplicities of meanings, to Ambiguities. And then we have his student William Empson's great *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, and then, the full-blown New Criticism itself.

THE SUBJECT of the New Criticism was Imitation. Seldom was Inspiration much considered, that is, the poet's mind or life or thought as prior to the poem; nor was there really much concern for Catharsis, for whatever the poem might do to the audience. The poem itself, its language as medium of Imitation and its various manners of Imitation were the things to study. Ransom, in *The New Criticism* (1941), which gave the movement its name, found Richards, Empson, Eliot, and Yvor Winters lacking in proper focus. Their insights were remarkable but based on wrong notions of what talk about poetry should be: poetry is not essentially psychology or history or morals. It is a peculiar mode of discourse mixing abstract reason with many unaccountable particulars of experience, including a rather inexplicable but central concern with the sounds themselves of the language. Coleridge had said something like this, Coleridge, that Ocean where each kind Doth streight its own resemblance find: "the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general, with the concrete; the idea, with the image. . . ." For Ransom this mixture into unity represented—Imitated—nothing less than the nature of the world itself. Insofar as his book may be supposed to have had an effect, it promoted by praise and demonstration the analytic practices of the critics, and it made efforts to connect these local terms with larger ones all but impossible. Just so, Ransom's own theory would seem to leave the minor term, Poetry, yearning for a connection with a major term of ultimate grandeur quite without benefit of a negotiable middle. And perhaps this was just as well. Theory is not everything. But *The New Criticism* is a book that might well be read more now, for its lovely and patient rationality, its delicate and yet sturdily sensible readings of poems as well as of critics. I could wish this book might be chosen over the many compendia of fallacies that so bemuse our graduate students of English today. (Is it the worse sin to be thus vague in reference or to be, in passing, invidious without any decent specificity of complaint? One, then, one compendium of fallacies: *Anatomy of Criticism*, Northrop Frye.)

So, on the whole, the New Critics in all their variety were not really ambitious to form an entire Poetics, and if anything except chronological coincidence and propinquity in three or four literary quarterlies could define them, it would be the banning of Inspiration and Catharsis from their consideration. As one of the most distinguished of them, Cleanth Brooks, has said of the movement, "The New Criticism has tended to explore the structure of the work rather than the mind and personality of the artist or the reactions of his various readers." This purification of literary criticism, the intense reading and intense analysis of structure certainly left the critics open to the charge, as Brooks says, of "having cut literature off from life." But who could tell what criticism really might be able to accomplish in such a momentous detachment as this? Life in our time seems to have been famously busy in cutting off one thing after another from itself: family from society, we believe, and man from family, thought from feeling, and both thought and feeling from work. . . . At least the New Criticism changed for its time not only the way of talking about poetry but it changed poetry itself (which always changes anyway). Its unachieved Poetics did not even take a clear direction and there was never any sort of agreement on a philosophical justification for Poetry. Toward the end of it, the movement produced its most brilliant critic, and Randall Jarrell had no time at all for poetic theory. Nor so far as we know does the chief poet of the movement and of all his age. Both of them were certainly much instructed in the fine operations of critical analysis but also certainly neither of them, Jarrell or Robert Lowell, were in their work "cut off from life." (Ransom said of Empson and Richards, "a brilliant pupil is presumptive evidence of the brilliant teacher." Then what to say of Ransom, teacher to both Jarrell and Lowell?)

Still there may be some charge brought that the New Criticism did at least inadvertently in all its quite proper concern somehow lend itself to the general weakening of Poetry as a cultural force in our time. In exposing much that was untenable in, say, 19th-century claims for Poetry, it denied these doubtful mufflings of public dignity to its own poets. The critics taught us too much about actual Poetry to allow us any longer our old Stock Responses of diffuse piety for the Bards. Statistically, no doubt Poetry has never been so much studied in the universities as now it is. But I suspect that the discipline stands somewhat in the place of classical studies a hundred years ago: never so well understood, never so well equipped with the materials of authentic texts and with fine tools to work them, and the trap is ready to be sprung under it as the center of curriculum.

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III

A NEW METHOD of analysis with great powers of discrimination in detail and great promises of generalizations to come now puts itself forward for literary studies. But before discussing Linguistics, I must mention a recent attempt at a more traditional kind of Poetics. Bearing distinguished praises from René Dubos, Allen Tate, Henri Peyre, Ned Rorem, Mark Van Doren, Kenneth Rexroth, and Hiram Haydn, Stanley Burnshaw's recent *The Seamless Web** proposes to give us "an inclusive understanding of the phenomena we call poetry," an understanding which will supplant "all extant views." But, in fact, as far as Poetics goes, he is pretty well limited to reshuffling the few cards first dealt by Plato, just as everyone else has been.

Burnshaw claims to have found new values for these cards. From the vocabulary of recent speculation about human evolution and biology, he has borrowed some ways of rephrasing the traditional doctrines of Inspiration, Imitation, and Catharsis. But his main purpose is to enclose all these terms in an odd enthusiastic vision of what Freud called the Oceanic feeling. Burnshaw himself has some difficulty in naming this sentiment. How you say in English, " 'At-oneness,' for all its plainness of statement, carries a portentous ring. 'Seamlessness' is a wholly negative abstraction. Still more difficult to envisage is the 'mixedness' of man's condition." This is his seamless web. To get us all woven back into it is to be the function of poetry. Boiled down and rearranged, then, in the ancient mode of discourse, Burnshaw states, first, that joining together the conscious mind and the unconscious would cause us to reexperience and reaffirm man's unity with nature. Second, Poetry causes us to join together the conscious mind and the unconscious. Ergo, Poetry causes us to reaffirm man's unity with nature.

The major term, what I have called a version of the Oceanic feeling, is stated rather as though it were really held by all of us in unquestioned assumption. To reexperience the kind of unity we felt in the womb: this is the supreme goal of human life. Attesting to this is chiefly a posthumous volume by Trigant Burrow, *Preconscious Foundations of Human Experience* (1964), as redacted by William E. Galt. Burnshaw reports that the authority of the book is perhaps excitingly uncertain. Burrow seems to have had a checkered career, for unexplained reasons. We are told he was dismissed from his university post and "excommunicated" from the American Psychoanalytic Association, but we are not told why. Burnshaw reports he could never get any social scientist to discuss a work by Burrow called *The Social Basis of Consciousness*. He also tells us the "experts" on human needs, drives, and instincts totally ignore "man's drive to regain, to recover, his primary organic unity with the rest of creation, his 'seamlessness.' " He mentions in another connection *Civilization and Its Discontents* but not the fact that Freud begins that book with an analysis of just that "drive." Of course Freud did not share Burnshaw's conviction that the womb is the ideal environment for an adult and that a man's loftiest achievement would be to recover that Eden. I do not think Burnshaw can quite command universal assent for this proposal. Many human endeavors we all admire have not had such a destination.

The middle term, his central cog, assumes that the conscious mind and the unconscious had better be reconciled. Here Burnshaw depends not on psychoanalysis for support but on certain speculations about the evolution of the human brain. Some of these are drawn from the above Burrow, others from a book called *Man's Presumptuous Brain* by A. T. W. Simeons. Simeons said of his own work, although Burnshaw does not tell us so, "This is a very controversial and highly speculative book intended at most to give some slight bias to modern thought on the psychosomatic mechanism." The speculations concern a supposed conflict between our old animal brain stem, presumed arbitrator of our instincts, and our newer cortex, presumed authority of our artificial human world. Of course some similar notions of man's nature have always been with us, if not in these phrenological exactitudes. We have seen Plato and Aristotle discussing them. Few today would doubt that there does seem to be some conflict in us, whether we call it that of emotion and reason, or whatever, and we might prefer to have it lessened. We do not require the evolutionary speculation in order to assent, at least tentatively, to this middle term.

But this gets us to the minor term, to Poetry. Poetry is going to reconcile our poor divided minds, and thus unite us with at-oneness, seamlessness, mixedness.

So here we have to get back to what Poetry is, Imitation; and how the poet produces it, Inspiration; and how the audience takes it, Catharsis. In Burnshaw's view, poetry occurs in the human mind, but the mind imitates the body, the body's pulsations of viscera and so on; thus the poet necessarily imitates his own body. As a part or function of the body, the mind finds its greatest happiness in producing regularly pulsing brain waves. These waves are disturbed by external stimuli, whereupon the mind busies itself to recover its original rhythmic bliss. This supposition is based on a statement by J. Z. Young, a biologist, who offers it, in Burnshaw's quotation, as "a speculative suggestion." With his characteristic generosity about credentials, Burnshaw takes it thereafter as a nailed-down fact. Perhaps

* Braziller, 336 pp., $7.50.

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this is sufficiently insecure, but the next step takes place—such a vehicle to such a tenor—in the regions of pure air. "Like anyone else, a creative artist inhales the surrounding world and exhales it. Whatever is taken in is given back in altered condition or transformed into matter, action, feeling, thought. And in the case of creative persons, an additional exhalation: in the form of words or sounds or shapes capable of acting upon others with the force of an object alive in their surrounding worlds."

Well, surely this is only Richards's *Principles* weakly rewritten, neurons and all, and Ransom's objections apply here as well. So much for Inspiration, so much for Imitation and for Catharsis. So much for Poetics.

Otherwise, this web is a wide one producing a great haul of quotations and citations, scarcely a page without five or six of them: Bradley, Valéry, Dubos, Plato, Blake, Lacan, Vallejo, Frost. . . . There are comments on many subjects related to Poetics, comments to which a writer is entitled, surely, when he has done his bit with the elements: sentences are discussed, rime, meter, metaphor, translation, and questions like do other animals think, do they make artworks; and how come we enjoy in art things that would be unpleasant in life? Answer: "The *Unlust* of art bears the intimation of our ultimate creature victoriousness." Thank you. Well, the subject of Poetics has inspired plenty of others to odd conjectures and admonitions, confusions and whimsies. Doubtless it will continue to do so, as at this very moment.

IV

THE NEW discipline advancing on Poetry is linguistics—advancing now more publicly, that is, since for many years, like the New Criticism before it had its name, linguistics was doing its work on literature in ways and places obscure to most readers. For many literary people it is a fearsome engine. The tiny particles and invisible structures of language to which it attends, the outrageous names and symbols by which it represents these, and the abstract mathematic rigor of its arrangements and rearrangements, all these seem as far from Poetry as the Binomial theorem. A discourse in linguistics makes even the most abstruse analyses of literary critics look like friendly chit-chat. These works are scattered, rapidly increasing, and their impact on literary studies has not been fully assessed.* (The journal *Linguistics* has forthcoming a survey of the newest linguistic studies of literature. If that little arrow → meaning "rewritten as" were not the linguists' favorite icon, then the word "forthcoming" would be. So busy they are.)

The most distinguished of linguists and veteran scholar of many literatures, Roman Jakobson, has recently published with a colleague, Lawrence G. Jones, a monograph that shows very certain achievements in this field, and shows, too, how uncertain may be the directions the movement can take. This is *Shakespeare's Verbal Art in Th'expence of Spirit.*†

We would expect a lot about structure in this examination of verbal art. Sonnets are of course by definition a highly organized literary form. Whichever of the various schemes for the fourteen lines the poet may select—the octave and sestet of the Petrarchan sonnet or the three quatrains and couplet of the English, each with a number of possibilities for various rime schemes—it has always been supposed, if not quite with the force of an Act of Uniformity against the poets, that the procedures of units of thought in the sonnet would conform more or less to the procedures of the units of form (or notably not conform, as when Milton ran over his sentences and thoughts from octave into sestet). Like the units of thought, the sounds conformed in the order of the rimes, and in other ways.

But just how various and complex the mutual relations could be between these fourteen lines and the categories the form divides, and then between the sounds identified within these categories, and between their phrasings, and their grammar—and their thought!—this could scarcely have been guessed before. I cannot here attempt more than a sketch of the wealth of indisputable data uncovered in *Shakespeare's Verbal Art.* The monograph is packed and detailed and not to be summarized without drastic loss.

But first, and after this intolerable deal of Poetics, one actual poem may be a relief, even superscribed as it is here with the marks set down for some of the structural features discerned by our linguistic analysts.

Sonnet 129

I 1. Th'expence of Spirit | in a waste of shame
2. Is lust in action, | and till action, lust
3. Is perjurd, murdrous, | blouddy full of blame,
4. savage extreame, rude, | cruel, not to trust,

II 1. Injoyd no sooner | but dispised straight,
2. Past reason hunted, | and no sooner had
3. Past reason hated | as a swollowd bayt,
4. On purpose layd | to make'the taker mad.

III 1. Mad(e) in pursut | and in possession so,
2. Had, having, and in quest, | to have extreame,
3. A blisse in proofe | and provd | a very wo,
4. Before a joy proposd | behind a dreame,

* A useful compendium is *Linguistics and Literary Style,* ed. Donald C. Freeman, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 384 pp., $5.95.

† Mouton (The Hague), available here from Humanities Press, $3.25.

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IV 1. All this the world | well knowes | yet none knowes well,
2. To shun the heaven | that leads | men to this hell.

In such an English or Shakespearean form of the sonnet, we are accustomed to noticing the three quatrains each with its four lines linked by their rimes, *shame, lust, blame, trust; straight, had, bayt, mad,* and so on. Then we notice too the final couplet, *well, hell,* and we expect that the final couplet will summarize the foregoing lines, oppose them, or otherwise reflect in meaning something of the kind of finality that the chime of sound in the couplet's rimes seems to give us after the alternating series of rimes in the quatrain.

Many of us have this old prejudice in art, no doubt a wise one, urging us that form and content are somehow inseparable. So when someone tells us he will show us more about form, we expect usually, I believe, that his demonstration will end in some increased estimate of the inseparable content. We may, in fact, think it rather an empty demonstration if it doesn't so end: mere design, like wallpaper.

I WILL TRY something like that test on *Shakespeare's Verbal Art*. But it is not a complete test by any means, nor perhaps quite relevant. I think deeper things are going on here than appear explicitly in this monograph, certainly deeper than in my tests. What we are looking for in language lies over the horizon and we can only find out what it is if we get there. Language is one of our last mysteries, and we know almost nothing of the relation of its forms to what it says. My kind of test, then, is only to show that it may be, in this case before us, that the authors themselves have seemed to ask for a test too crude for their real intentions.

A linguist is trained to observe particles of language we only use, and use without knowing how. And he is trained also to observe the way these particles recur and how according to the deep laws of our language they may or may not combine with one another, and then how the combinations of sounds may make words and phrases and sentences. The basic sounds of our language are not very many and they are selected from the really quite few sounds the human vocal apparatus can make. We have only a few vowels to work with and a few more consonants. Languages seem to have a way of pairing these off against one another so that sounds which are nearly alike are yet distinguishable to us. Sometimes the distinction is purely mental, as when most of us actually make or hear no real difference between *beetle* and *beadle* but distinguish them by the context. In the same way, linguists are given to worrying about pairs like *lighthouse* and *light house* and just what the rules are that we unconsciously encode and decode here; or with considerable complexity they worry out the grammatical rules that allow us to distinguish between sentences so apparently alike in syntax, on the surface, as, *I persuaded John to leave,* and, *I expected John to leave.*

Given a poem with fourteen lines, then, Jakobson sees first of all a form with more complications than ordinarily we see in the sonnet. There are many elements of this structure that may be paired and contrasted. The monograph examines these at all "levels" of language to observe how they correspond: the sounds of vowel and consonant; the classes of words (noun or not-noun, for instance, and then all the others); the types of phrases, the sentences, the figurative language, and other special sorts of device; and, finally, the meaning. Then we must see how all this adds up.

As it comes out, the correspondences are (up to a point) astonishing, whether we compare the qualities of odd lines with even lines, of odd strophes with even strophes, of outer strophes I and IV with inner strophes II and III, of the first two strophes with the last two. We find that sounds, grammar, meaning, all these really are arranged in sets of contrast. Even, the first seven lines may be opposed to the last seven: then the poem has a center. And the center marks a shift in rhythmic patterns, as the vertical lines introduced into the text above show. All the lines up to the center break in the middle of the third foot, after that they break before or after the middle foot, usually both places. The apparently anomalous punctuation of III 2, *Had, having, and in quest, to have extreame,* marks with a comma (after a familiar Elizabethan custom) a metrical break which the phrasing itself would not indicate. And I have mentioned only a few of the correspondences the monograph finds.

For a brief skeletonized example, we can take the consideration of how the pair of odd strophes, I and III, are opposed to the even strophes. We find a clear contrast all through. (I will omit the charting of sound clusters. Alerted to their presence, any reader can observe the many repetitions of vowels and of consonant clusters—there are more of them, and they are more patterned into groups by line, than we could expect even from the necessary repetitions in our limited repertory of English sounds. The final couplet particularly is dense with these clusters.)

But to return to the contrast of odd and even strophes. And I must skip even more here, the classification of parts of speech, of abstract and concrete words, of animate and inanimate, all of this impressively detailed. I will get on to one of the larger grammatical structures, and then to how the monograph relates this to the "Interpretations" of the sonnet. There is a grammatical form peculiar to the two even strophes which directly reflects, the authors believe, the way the plot of the poem works. They do not say it quite as I do in my doubtlessly naive way, but if I un-

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derstand them, they mean that these grammatical constructions not only occur at twin vital structural points in the poem, and state the main theme of it, and introduce the two characters of the plot, but in their similar progression grammatically they imitate the progressive actions of the plot.

The "progressive structures" of these two key segments, so much like each other, differ radically from the grammar of the rest of the lines. In effect they produce a whole string of connected things showing cause and effect, where the other lines tend to pile up their objects and their phrases in mere conjunction.

> II A) *hated* B) *as a swollowed bayt,* C) *on purpose layd* D) *to make* E) *the taker* F) *mad.*
>
> IV A) *none knowes well,* B) *to shun* C) *the heaven* D) *that leads* E) *men* F) *to this hell.*

The grammatical structure here is supposed to be a kind of demonstration of the underlying cause and effect in the plot of the poem. The hero, the *taker,* is introduced in the last line of II. The last line of IV "brings the exposure of the malevolent culprit, *the heaven that leads men to this hell,* and thus discloses by what perjurer the joy was propos'd and lure laid."

I BELIEVE WE may now go on directly to the "Interpretation," always remembering how the actual detail that makes up the substance of the monograph is scarcely indicated here. This will have to be rather a long quotation.

> The sonnet has two topics—the lust and the luster—and omits the designation of the former in the final strophe and the designation of the latter in the initial strophe. The abstract appellation of the first topic attracts a string of further abstract nouns. The first strophe characterizes lust in itself; the second launches a set of passive participles with a hint to the yet unnamed dramatis personae and finishes by referring to the *taker* of the *bayt*; the third strophe uses active participles to depict the taker's behavior and brings forward images of lust as objects of his striving. The adjective *extreame* applied to lust in the first strophe is transferred to the luster in the third. Mere anaphoric pronouns refer in the terminal couplet to the previous representation of lust, and the notion of the luster grows into a generalized idea of men and their damnation. The final line seems to allude to the ultimate persona, the celestial condemner of mankind.

Finally, the authors claim, "An objective scrutiny of Shakespeare's language and verbal art, with particular reference to this poem, reveals a cogent and mandatory unity of its thematic and compositional framework." Their demonstration of the compositional framework seems to me beyond challenge and of real importance. This "subliminal verbal patterning," as Jakobson has called it, operating in large part outside the awareness of either writer or reader, is undoubtedly a feature of poetry, perhaps a distinguishing feature. Samuel R. Levin has explored it as such in *Linguistic Structures in Poetry* (1962), discovering relations "imposing on the discourse some structure additional to that which derives from the language as it is normally used." Now, we have all been familiar with this in traditional English verse. Meter is a structure of sound derived from the language as normally used: it is derived from the stress patterns of spoken English which are then given a structure in addition to, and in relation to, that normally used. In the same way is rime derived and structured, and then the lesser devices of alliteration, assonance, and the others. But what is the relation of these structures, the framework of sound and then, as with Jakobson's analysis, of syntactic units also, to the thematic framework? Is there a "cogent and mandatory unity" of these? By what mandate?

Here in this poem there seems reason for doubt. With the monograph's ultimate interpretation I would not quarrel, we would be foolish to allow ourselves to stop short of any but the maximum intention we can imagine for Shakespeare. Surely we must not suppose he could fail to realize that *heaven* must present among other things the "ultimate persona" Himself, just as we know, at another extreme, he meant hell to present, among other things, the physical vagina itself.

I cannot quite make out why the "malevolent culprit" who has supplied lust to the luster is thereby a perjurer also. Lust is perjured and does this make its provider so too; or are lust and the culprit somehow one? But this does not really trouble me.

The doubt arises rather from the confidence of the monograph that the climactic progression of verbal art goes along with a like climactic progression of thematic presentation. When the authors chide other critics for saying the poem has "no logical organization at all" (John Crowe Ransom), or that there is a "fading out" of the initial bitter disgust (Richard Levin), or when they claim a carefully maintained distinction between *lust* and *luster,* or victim and condemner, then we can wonder. In the abrupt and powerful opening, so unlike most of the sugared lines of the other sonnets (its emphatic piling up of sound-clusters, stresses, so well analyzed here, its words of violence, its physical depiction of the sex act), then, yes, it seems to be clear enough what lust is. It is the sexual urge, and it is considered in the act, before the act, and afterward: murderous, savage, cruel, while seeking the act; destructive of the man physically and spiritually in the act; and then afterward causing the man to despise and hate sex.

The image of the *swollowd bayt* is also pow-

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erful but really it is not quite logical, for if the man is made mad by taking it then how was he mad before, or "made" so, as the Quarto has it in III 1, *Made in pursut and in possession so;* and at this point the elliptical syntax leads, perhaps properly enough if we consider the case dramatically or psychologically but *not* logically, if we remember that lust has just been a bait to be swallowed, to an inextricability of *lust* and *luster.* Perhaps I have only a quibble here, and we all respect Shakespeare's rich effects of multiple mixed images. But is not the harsh initial energy running down toward the end in favor of sweetened lines and conventional diction? *A blisse in proofe* is a less striking phrase for the sex act than *Th'expence of Spirit in a waste of shame;* nor does a *very wo,* or a *dreame,* even if we call the dream a phantom, seem to be of an intensity that must be *dispisd, past reason hated,* or make a man go mad.

As John Crowe Ransom once remarked, a poem is a unique sort of chain that unlike others is as strong as its strongest link, but that is not to say we should suppose all the links, even such fantastically intricate links as these, must necessarily be equal to those powerful ones that can hold in themselves the whole poem's value.

And if I may make one more reference to Ransom, he used to talk about the necessary "indeterminacies" that the poem's structures of sound caused in their queer union with the poem's meaning, just as the necessities of some more or less necessary kind of sense caused indeterminacies in the ideal sound pattern. These indeterminacies, he thought, constituted Poetry's unique value as discourse. In both directions they brought in more than could otherwise have been there. Perhaps we should remember this and not suppose too soon that the new techniques, revealing unforeseen intricacies of correspondence in structure, will necessarily point to other correspondences as well. Although in many ways they do so point in this splendid reading of *Th'expense of Spirit.*

V

Now a final few words, my own inevitable claim I make like all those who have ever dared play with the counters of Inspiration, Imitation, and Catharsis, that in my words alone are these truly understood. My words are few because although I know that a sense of conviction comes to the reader only with many repetitions in hundreds of pages, this would be only a shifting of the accumulated weights of twenty-five hundred years. Insofar as I can budget these at all, I move them only slightly and mostly only point at them, a thing quickly enough done.

As to the largest purposes and functions of art, where we must all agree somehow in our way with Plato and Aristotle that art serves the very purpose of humanity, I have sketched my notions of this before,* and what I have to say now is a little more modest, it has only to do with the minor and middle terms of the grand proposition.

These particles and structures of language, so clearly observed now by the linguists as they hear us work them in our everyday talk, manipulating as we must the very limited number of sounds in the limited combinations that have been selected for us by our language, all within the paths of syntax that are yet to be charted, but charted surely they will be—so the linguists promise and so we must suppose—these particles of sound and these paths are reiterated, reified, in Poetry, in the art of language. They are thus reiterated and reified beyond any practical use in communication, though they may incidentally serve it too and doubtless always do at Poetry's very best. This reiteration is an Imitation of language itself. It is neither the importance of the object recorded in our verbal arts nor even the most superb ordering of the medium that we celebrate or respond to in Poetry. It comes to this, that we are reminded, all subliminally to be sure, and yet with increasing and constant lowering of that threshold these days, how the order of language exists for us: how we can—and must—record our Imitations of ourselves. I mean something quite baldly specific by that Imitation of ourselves, our essential humanity, as I tried to say in "The End of Culture." But it is enough to say now that what poets are really talking about is language itself.

They are talking about the little particles of language and about the structures of language, and about how strangely words can come to stand for things without being those things. Any one of the collocations we call a "brilliant phrase" tells us this, as we are struck by what is said and how it is said—that it can be said! But Poetry forces us always to think this way. This is its Imitation.

Celebrating the achievement of his peer Roman Jakobson, I. A. Richards recalled† his fears and high hopes of nearly fifty years ago, and again with his great spirit took such hope as he could, in this time of even more frightfully destructive powers, from what Jakobson has done to help us "to read better." To read better! Is that where we are to put our hopes in this world? And to read Poetry, at that. But perhaps just the fact that this is not at all our general direction is some reason to trust in it.

* "The End of Culture," COMMENTARY, December 1969.
† London *Times Literary Supplement,* May 28, 1970.

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On Being Deradicalized

Nathan Glazer

How does a radical—a mild radical, it is true, but still someone who felt closer to radical than to liberal writers and politicians in the late 1950's—end up by early 1970 a conservative, a mild conservative, but still closer to those who now call themselves conservative than to those who call themselves liberal? I seem to have moved from a position in which I was a bit embarrassed to be considered liberal (surely I was a degree further to the Left than that!) to a position where I am again embarrassed, but from the other side: surely I am not so "Establishmentarian" as that!

One way of explaining this change is to describe what it was to be a mild radical in the late 1950's. Consider the writers who, in those days before and just after the Cuban revolution, were thought of as radical: Paul Goodman, Dwight Macdonald, Irving Howe, Michael Harrington, C. Wright Mills. Consider the kinds of actions that radicals engaged in then. One demonstrated—if one lived in New York—against civil defense in City Hall park, applauded Castro's speech in Central Park (applauding Castro more than his speech: who knew what he was saying?), joined with Jane Jacobs in her attacks on urban renewal, supported the organization of public-housing tenants and other groups of the poor and dismissed New Deal political orientations in their current liberal Democratic phase as outdated and insufficiently farreaching.

All of us who stood in these ways to the Left of the liberals shared, of course, in a complete disdain of apologists for Russian and Chinese oppression: the least we could agree on was free speech, civil liberties, and democratic procedures. The division between "liberal" and "radical" in those days did not run along the line of more or less sympathy with Communist states, as it so often seems to do today. After the exposure of Stalin's ferocity, Russian anti-Semitism, Communist suppression of all originality in the arts, those who still saw some virtues in the Communist version of socialism had simply grown silent. In the area of international affairs, the division was between the "mainstream" liberals who tended to find America's foreign policy—NATO, nuclear deterrence, the maintenance of Berlin's special status—basically sound and those of us, standing further to the Left, who were convinced that the nuclear arms race would lead inexorably to a final disaster. We were unimpressed or horrified by the new strategic thinking involving game theory and nuclear deterrence, not that we were very clear about what we would put in its place. We believed that there were more opportunities for negotiation with Russia and for détente with the Communist world than American foreign policy supposed. We did not like the frozen stance of the United States on Berlin: were there not more imaginative solutions? The *Correspondent*, a newsletter created by David Riesman and Erich Fromm, and which I edited for a short time, reflected some of these views.

In domestic affairs the radical position was skeptical of the intelligence and capacities of large bureaucracies, whether in education, welfare, urban renewal, housing, or government in general. Having found nothing in particular in Marx to explain either what was wrong with modern society or what might help (certainly not the monstrous state bureaucracies of Russia and its imitators), radicals in those days were in a condition of peculiar openness. When Norman Podhoretz became editor of COMMENTARY in 1960, his quest for something which would mark a departure from old and rigid positions and would suggest the direction in which we might now move led him to seize on Paul Goodman's manuscript, *Growing Up Absurd*, most of which he published in the first few issues of COMMENTARY he turned out. Jason Epstein, at Random House, trying to find something that expressed his own blocked radical instincts, also seized upon the same talisman: this was fresh, new, radical. Goodman, thus restored to prominence, began to publish like a flowing stream. All his books emphasized the anti-bureaucratic, the small and immediate, the human-scale as the salvation of a society grown too large, too highly organized and articulated, too suppressive of instinct and feeling.

Many rivulets of the late 1950's fed the radicalism of the early 1960's. There was the fight

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against urban renewal and other overblown programs such as Mobilization for Youth on the Lower East Side of New York. There was the beginning of campus political activity—in Berkeley in 1957-58, where students organized the first campus party, Slate, a distant premonition of what was to come; and on a number of other campuses where chapters of the Student Peace Union came into being and where publications like *New University Thought* and *Studies on the Left* (taking their inspiration from the English *New Left Review*, which gave the name "New Left" to the New Left) began to appear. The organizing impulse was taken over by SDS. Its Port Huron statement of 1962, a model of humanist radicalism, even stopped short of socialism in its refusal of any commitment to a developed Marxist political position or analysis. SDS would go to the people and learn from them, and so it did in the early organizing projects in the Newark slums, in the poor white areas of Chicago, and elsewhere.

ALL THESE various developments then seemed of a piece—criticism of American foreign policy, of the strategy of nuclear deterrence, of home-grown bureaucracies; the emphasis on humanism, on going to the roots, on the small-scale and the immediate. This was the radicalism of the late 1950's, and holding to it was sufficient to distinguish one from liberalism. John F. Kennedy meant little to us: he was just another liberal politician, though the fact that some of our friends worked for him did make a difference.

This was a radicalism that had a good deal in common with conservatism—the bias against government intervention in various areas, the willingness to let people decide for themselves how to spend their money, the belief that the theoretical and political structures reared by liberals to control policy in the foreign and domestic realms would no longer work, the allergy to Communist repression, the attraction toward the small. Paul Goodman and Norman Mailer express this affinity when, on various occasions, they call themselves "conservative"—indeed, in some respects they are, and for this among other reasons they do not go along with those developments that place so much of the radicalism of the late 1960's squarely in the succession to the simple-minded, grotesque, freedom-denying radicalism of the Leninists and Stalinists of the 1930's.

Thus, one explanation of my own move from a mild radicalism to a mild conservatism is that the character of radicalism changed over the course of the decade. But it would be incomplete to leave it at that. I changed too, and perhaps the largest influence in that change was a year spent in Washington, in the Housing and Home Finance Administration. I learned, to my surprise, that most of the radical ideas my friends and I were suggesting had already been thought of, considered, analyzed, and had problems in their implementation that we had never dreamed of. I learned to respect many of the men who worked in the huge bureaucracies, who limited their own freedom, and who made it possible occasionally for the radical ideas of others to be implemented. I learned that the difficulty with many radical ideas lay in the fact that so many varied interests played a role in government, and that most of them were legitimate interests. It was a big country, and it contained more kinds of people than were dreamed of on the shores of the Hudson. I learned, in quite strictly conservative fashion, to develop a certain respect for what was; in a world of infinite complexity some things had emerged and survived, and if the country was in many ways better than it might be or had been (just as in many ways it was much worse than it might be or would be), then something was owed to its political institutions and organizational structures.

My experience at the University of California in Berkeley, where I went to teach in 1963, carried a similar lesson. Many interests were represented in that strange and inefficient amalgam—students, their parents, professors, taxpayers, business, and even unions—and yet each of these interests, in its narrow-mindedness, saw the institution as properly expressing only its own desires. I did not share some of my colleagues' views of administrators; I believed they were doing necessary and difficult things in reconciling these complex interests, and I appreciated the additional freedom I possessed by virtue of their work. I did not believe universities should be run for the pleasure and convenience of the faculty alone, as—with faculty bargaining power so great by 1964—in large measure they were. Neither, however, did I believe that it was good or wise or possible for them to be run for the pleasure and convenience of the students—let alone a particular element of the student body. So I changed, finding it harder to participate in a casual attack on existing institutions without considering what would replace them and whether it would mark any improvement.

Radicalism certainly spread as the 1960's moved on, but many radicals also fell away. One must consider to what extent it was they who changed, to what extent it was they who gave up on positions they had once considered humane and rational, and even more seriously to what extent they gave up on these positions simply because the fight for them turned out to demand a far more intense and fierce and violent opposition to the conservative institutions of society than they had originally expected. One asks oneself, having agreed in some measure with Mario Savio about the nature of the "machine" upon whose gears he asked the students of Berkeley to throw

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themselves, why one withdrew when the opposition to bureaucracy escalated from discourse, petitions, and debates to the whole sequence of actions, including violent actions, with which we are by now all too familiar.

One is reminded of the paths away from Communism. When did the break come and why? What action finally seemed insupportable? There is no point in pushing the parallel too far. One thing that was the same was the bitter division that developed among intellectuals. It was impossible for those of us who were alive and conscious during World War II and Korea to take the same easy path as the radical youth. We had known the country and its army in different times and in different wars. The United States had defeated Hitler and had turned back the brutal invasion of a small country by its better organized, better armed, and infinitely more repressive neighbor. Even as the cloud over Vietnam grew, even as the reports of the horrors came through (and no one can say the reporting was not full or adequate or immediate), we were torn between the old style of political action and the new. We valued the country, the role it had played in international affairs, its ability to handle complex domestic problems, its stability in the maintenance of democratic procedures, its capacity for change and correction.

And some of us were affected similarly by developments on the racial scene. Having lived before the Supreme Court decision of 1954, the Montgomery bus strike, the Birmingham movement of 1963, we had seen significant change—the registration of Negroes in the South; the election of hundreds of Negro officials; the growing role of Negroes in the mass media, the universities, government; the solid hope for a greater role in business and the unions. Yet along with these changes—some, of course, in response to pressure and even violence, but many, too, that represented the inexorable movement toward equality that was proceeding on many fronts and for many reasons—came increasing radicalization, increasing vituperation, increasing disaffection with the country and its institutions.

It was impossible for many of us to accept the easy and frequent equations of the United States with Nazi Germany, of Johnson with Hitler. At first one signed ads against the Vietnam war. Later the ads became fiercer: they not only called for ending the war and getting out, they accused the country's leaders of the same crimes for which Germany had been condemned at Nuremberg. Then people took their stand and divided, and it sometimes seemed that one of the key factors determining the division was a capacity for hatred. Did you hate Johnson enough—or Rusk, or Rostow, or the police, or the leaders of South Vietnam? Did you hate the Southerners enough, or the Northern white middle classes, or the Northern white workers, or the Jewish schoolteachers of New York? It was not pleasant then, and it is not pleasant now.

Thus, more and more people who had been radicals at the start of the decade fell away, and new radicals were made to replace them, the replacements eventually far outnumbering the fallen away, as the student revolt which began at Berkeley in 1964 spread to encompass universities and colleges of every kind and in every part of the country. But if this revolt made radicals of many who had previously considered themselves liberals, the course it took also served to deepen the estrangement from radicalism of others like myself who saw it as a threat to the very existence of the university and to the values of which the university, with all its faults, was a unique and precious embodiment.

II

I was from the beginning convinced of the importance of the student revolt. I did not see it as an expression of youthful high spirits, or of earnest youth insisting on a better education, or of committed youth demanding the right of political activity and participation on the campus, or of passionate youth insisting that the institutions of higher education abandon hypocrisy and the support of evil public policies. It was all these things of course, in some measure. But if I had felt that they were the dominant factors, I would have joined all those faculty members, intellectuals, and political leaders—there were so many of them all during this period, and there are so many of them now, in the year 1970, as the fires and dynamite charges are set—who welcomed the student revolt because, they said, it brought a breath of fresh air to the stale universities, because it forced them to become responsive to the needs of their students and the society, because it insisted that the universities take the lead in solving society's critical problems, because these were the best-educated youth in American society, the most morally committed, the most concerned with injustice. I could see some evidence for all this, but from the beginning I saw something else, too, and that was a passion for immediate action, for confrontation, for the humiliation of others, for the destruction of authority—any authority, whether necessary and worthwhile or not—and finally, for the destruction of what was most distinctive and most valuable about the universities—their ability to distance themselves from immediate crises, their concern with the heritage of culture and science, their encouragement of individuality and even eccentricity.

From the beginning I believed that it did not get us to the heart of the matter to analyze the revolt primarily in terms of such issues as faculty-student relations, the nature of administration, the growth and subsequent bureaucratization of

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the university, the impact of research and government grants on teaching, the relevance of curriculum. All these things were important. All concerned me. But when student discontent broke into forceful action at Berkeley, it bore very little relation to these grave developments in higher education. And in time, as the revolt spread to such very different colleges and universities as Chicago, Columbia, Wisconsin, San Francisco State, Harvard, the City College of New York, it became clearer that the causes did not lie in the special character of a given college or university. Berkeley had an enormous undergraduate college that received little attention from the senior faculty; Chicago and Columbia had the smallest undergraduate colleges, with perhaps the greatest commitment to undergraduate teaching, of any major university; Harvard did not have classified research; some places did not have much research of any kind; some had favorable faculty-student ratios, and some unfavorable. None of these differences mattered.

In particular, to see the student revolt as directed at educational inadequacy, or as a movement that could be satisfied by educational change, was sentimental. Educational reform was a rather low priority of the Berkeley Free Speech Movement and its heirs, important as it may have been to individual leaders, and to a good number of followers. The objective of the student revolt quite clearly became not that of transforming the universities and colleges from the point of view of their proper ends—that is, as institutions devoted to teaching and research—but rather of transforming them so that they could realize quite other, and directly political, ends. The thrust of the student revolt in situation after situation was to bend the universities and colleges to the political orientation and outlook of the radical students, who saw the university as a potential recruiting ground, and then as an active participant in the political struggles of society.

The position of the critics of the student movement—certainly of this critic—became a peculiar and difficult one. I shared the ostensible concern with university and college reform. All the issues raised were in one way or another real, and in one way or another important—free political activity on the campus, the parental role of the college or university, its involvement with the state, its inability to order its various functions properly. I also shared the growing horror at the consequences of public policy, principally in Vietnam but also in other areas—nuclear and biological warfare, the bloated military expenditures starving other needs, the mechanical resort to technology to solve problems regardless of their human complexity. And yet, with all these elements of agreement, on one point I stuck, and that point made me an enemy: yes, let us reform the university, and let us, if we can, save the world, but let us not sacrifice the university on either altar, because there is no need that we should.

I was willing to concede that academic freedom often looked like—and often was—academic irrelevance, academic exoticism, academic self-seeking, academic status-striving, academic arrogance, and for that matter a cover for political action, too. On the whole, the share that all these played in the academic enterprise had not, I thought, increased in recent times, even as the academic enterprise itself had undergone such enormous expansion (here I accepted the judgment of analysts of the academic scene like Christopher Jencks and David Riesman). All these excrescences on the academic enterprise could be reduced without endangering what was after all one of the most remarkable products of civilization. The willingness of government (and in this country, private interests) to support scholars in freedom to pursue research and teaching with very minor interference and constraint should not, I thought, be taken for granted: it would be all too easy to arrange matters so that this rare development should come to an end, as it did for a time in Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia, and elsewhere.

The student radicals and their allies, both inside and outside the universities, argued that it was hypocritical to speak of defending academic freedom. Were the universities not already directly involved in political activities? Were they not engaged in defense research, research in support of American foreign policy, research in support of private economic interests? Did their teaching not reflect their interests, did they not train the ROTC, not to mention employees of government and private business? Parts of this critique had force. As it was extended, however, all critical distinctions were lost, and uncompromising styles of thinking and analysis emerged. When this happened—and it happened regularly as we can see by comparing the rhetoric of the beginning of each phase of the movement with that of its later phases—the issue shifted from the question of whether this movement would reform the university or turn public policy around to whether it would destroy the university. I argued from the start that the new tactics, the new violence of language, and the new joy in confrontation and political combat contained more of a threat to what remained valuable within the universities than a hope either of changing them or of changing public policy.

As the criticism of the universities came to be cast in the current radical rhetoric, one saw again the rise of the doctrine that there could be no neutrality, no objectivity, not even partial neutrality or objectivity: in the famous words of Eldridge Cleaver, "If you are not part of the solution [that is, if you are not actively with us], you are part of the problem [that is, you are against us]." If this

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doctrine were to become widely accepted, or acted upon, there would be no function for the universities and they would be as good as dead.

A real issue—the degree to which the universities had become embroiled in the disastrous foreign policies of the United States government—was translated into the kind of undifferentiated blanket issue that radicals of the Left and Right have always favored. The Peace Corps became as bad as the CIA (I leave aside the question of how bad *that* was—the CIA became an issue which could barely be raised with physical safety in the universities), innocuous research on government contracts as bad as direct research in support of military tactics, studying the characteristics of developing countries morally equivalent to plotting to overthrow them. These are not extravagant statements: they will only sound extravagant to those who have not had direct experience with university campuses. To radicals, those of us who believed that these differences were still important became "part of the problem."

This style of absolute thinking, which characterized so many different things as all being in the service of "imperialism," "racism," and "capitalism," also served to obscure the distinctive characteristics of the colleges and universities: their commitment to free inquiry, free discussion, free teaching—characteristics that were valuable whatever the disasters of American policy, foreign, military, or domestic, might be. But these virtues were not obscured only by the idea which insisted that the colleges and universities must be enlisted in radical social change (a belief which became surprisingly influential among many who were not themselves radical); they had already been considerably obscured by developments within the universities and in the relationships among universities and government and other outside authorities. Thus, a good part of the support that was needed for the enormous expansion of the universities and colleges was granted on the basis of the argument that these institutions provided trained employees for business and government, did valued research for them, and added to the gross national product. I have always doubted that this argument can really be substantiated. When economists assert that a certain investment in higher education will do more for the economic development of a poor country than a steel mill or a dam, they may have a point, but a point that is commonly exaggerated to a grotesque degree. As David Riesman has often said, we veil our idealistic and altruistic and playful impulses in pragmatic and self-interested guise, and by "we," I mean all kinds of people in all countries. Higher education has always had a role as simply a consumption good; this must have been more obvious when it was reserved for the upper and upper-middle classes, and there were clear distinctions between those who were trained to practice some useful profession (doctors, engineers, lawyers), and those who were being "finished" to take up a life in a particular social milieu. Colleges and universities also have a role in providing a "liberal" education, whose economic or practical value is undeterminable. And they have a role, of equally uncertain value economically, in maintaining and extending knowledge of the arts and sciences: it was in this connection that the idea of academic freedom developed, and that universities became to some extent centers of social criticism.

As the growth of universities was increasingly justified in terms of service and contribution to economic growth, the simple fact that they exist also to provide liberal education and to protect knowledge, speculation, and criticism, tended to get overlooked. Argument rarely took account of these functions of the university, even though in reality they grew along with the professional schools and the more practical parts of the physical and social sciences. When the situation called for radical social criticism, the universities and colleges, despite their development in the direction of service, direct professional qualification, and research for clients, had great reserves of it in store—more than any other part of society could provide.

For this and other reasons, then, many of us continued to regard the university as precious. To the degree that radicalism in the latter part of the 60's wished to destroy the university or even refused to acknowledge its right to distance itself from the world, to remain free to be foolish or irrelevant or outrageous no matter how great the horrors of the world outside, to that degree were we further estranged from the radicalism with which we had begun.

III

THERE WAS, finally, one other large consideration which entered into my transformation from mild radical to mild conservative, and this was the conviction which grew upon me as the decade progressed that we are entering a world in which various forms of new social control will become necessary. They will become necessary not because some men want to control others, or because organizations want to shape men to their will, or because social institutions inevitably turn men into their servants (though all these things are true), but because human demands, demands that most of us consider good and proper, and that the radicals among us support most enthusiastically, cannot be satisfied without highly developed organizations and some limits on human freedom.

This is a position that is easy to misunderstand, and radicals—and not they alone—regularly misunderstand it. The democratic and egalitarian revolution means that people do not accept tra-

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dional limits on their standards of living, on their desire for material goods, on their demand for political participation and for control of their own lives. Most of us generally see all this as leading ultimately to a better society, a society in which every person receives varied and nutritious food, good housing, adequate clothing, proper medical care, access to higher education, opportunities for travel and for wider experience and for playing more active political and social roles. If we are to be truly equal, such goods and services cannot be denied to anyone; if we are democratic, people will insist on a higher and higher level of governmental responsibility to provide these goods and services; if our systems of communication are such that everyone is aware of the level of goods and services that prevail in some places, and the deficiencies that still obtain in others, then a democratic people, in an egalitarian society, will know what to demand.

To meet such demands inevitably means greater social control. It means heavy taxation, to pay the cost; it means setting limits on the building of houses and on the growth of towns to maintain some measure of amenity as population and production expand; it means stricter regulation not only of industry in its disposal of waste but of ordinary people who may wish to burn refuse or discard litter ("Alice's Restaurant" deals with larger issues than Arlo Guthrie perhaps knows, and the heroes may well turn out to be the officer and the judge). In the end it may mean the control of such intimate human functions as the right to bring children into the world. The expansion of human freedom in some directions, one can demonstrate, must ultimately mean the limitation of human freedom in others. Young people, wishing to divest themselves of a corrupt civilization, take to what they conceive to be the wilderness, to live with freedom and without restraint. But if they litter the wilderness, pollute the streams, and abandon cars in the forest, their freedom to seek what they consider the good life will have to be restrained so that some aspect of the good life can be retained for others. Some day we may get tickets to visit Yosemite—one visit to a lifetime, and perhaps they will be sold and bought on the stock market—just as licenses to bear and raise one's quota of children may be bought and sold on the stock market. How else can one reconcile the expansion of human desires and the insistence on equality with the growth of population?

This incapacity of the earth, as nature and God left it to us, to support the rising human demands that are now encouraged by every social force, justified by every major philosophy and ideology, accepted as legitimate by every major government, will inevitably mean that a society of freedom, plenty, equality, and loose or no organization cannot come into being, whatever the passionate convictions of young radicals.

Obviously, within the large general perspective I have presented, there are many alternatives, from Sweden on down. But neither to our young radicals nor to theirs does Sweden seem to be the way of the future. Yet even Sweden is better off today than it will be, as immigration brings more people into the country, and as it seeks to share its wealth with poorer countries like North Vietnam. And even Sweden today demands, and must demand, stronger controls than the United States does, in order to maintain its advanced social and physical environment. It takes more in taxes, limits the freedom of its citizens to build houses, more systematically regulates their educational and occupational choices, records all the facts about them in a national computerized system.

Some of us have called the student rebels "Luddites"—machine smashers—and have been answered: the Luddites of the early Industrial Revolution smashed machines that were good for life; the students smash the machines that bring death. This simple retort will not carry us very far. Even in the United States, engaged in an awful war, less than 10 per cent of the gross national product goes to the military, and a good part of that provides education, medical care, housing, food, and clothing for some millions of people.

The radicals answer that much of the remaining 90 per cent is also life-denying, going to such unnecessary or harmful products as cars, roads, and television sets. But the vast majority of the population sees in these things the essence of the good life. Human wants can be met in many ways, but they cannot be met by dismantling the machinery, physical and institutional, of modern society. Only a drastic reduction in standards of living—and radicals are the first to insist that standards are already too low for large numbers of our people—or a drastic reduction in the total number of people is compatible with the degree of freedom from organization, control, discipline, and responsibility for the support of others that seems to be the special demand of contemporary radicals.

THE YOUNG radical guerrillas now engaged in the sabotage of social organization take it for granted that they will be provided with complex means of transportation and communication, and with food, clothing, shelter, and medical care. The easy availability of these things is based on a system they deride and which in their confusion they want to bring down, not realizing that they themselves and all those they wish to help would thereby be reduced to misery. The arduous and necessary discipline of Cuba and China does not deter them from taking those countries as models, or perhaps really only as symbols, since they know almost nothing about them. The mild discipline of free countries, which makes it possible for large numbers

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to withdraw into nonproductive styles of life, they experience as more chafing.

This argument is often mistaken as simply a moral argument: "Since the radical youth benefit from modern capitalist society, they have no right to attack it, just as Marx and Engels, since they benefited from capitalism and led a life based (in their theory) on the exploitation of others, placed themselves in an insupportable moral position."

Perhaps there is some justice in the moral argument; I am not sure. But in any case I am not making a moral argument, I am making a logical one, based on empirical reality. What I am asserting is that to dismantle the structures of modern society will mean a radical reduction in the general standard of living. Rather than weakening these structures, we must alas strengthen them. In other words, we cannot insist on giving more people the opportunity to maintain a high standard of living and simultaneously demand that they be given a greater freedom from control, from work, from family discipline. More and better food will mean more people working on food production and distribution. Better housing will mean more people working on the production and maintenance of housing. Better medical care will mean more people working in health services. Access to better communication and transportation will mean more people working on these systems. The belief that the introduction of new machinery and technology makes possible the release from labor was an illusion in Marx's day, and is an illusion in ours. The rising level of human demand and human expectations steadily outstrips the productivity of machines, and by now the ecological damage caused by many kinds of machines means that we must find ways of containing the rise of these demands and expectations. Rich countries have severer shortages of labor than poor countries, and countries like Sweden, West Germany, and Japan which spend little on arms or on other life-denying products have the worst shortages.

It is only in literary utopias that there is less work to do. In real societies which attempt to improve themselves, whether by reform or revolution, whether it be England or Sweden or Yugoslavia or Cuba or China, there is a continual demand for more work, and more and more people are drawn into the work force. First the rural population is driven from its life of following the seasons, with its periods of leisure; then the women are recruited into the work force; finally foreign labor is imported from those countries in which progress is not yet so far advanced. Nor can we simply place quotation marks around the word "progress": what we are talking about is the kind of change, after all, that revolutionaries, as well as reformers and conservatives, encourage and promise to the people of the world.

* * *

IT WAS CONSIDERATIONS such as these which led me to believe that the radical thinking of the late 1960's was almost completely misguided, based on an amazing ignorance of the lineaments of modern society and an almost equally amazing arrogance. One saw formulations by Marxist activists and scholars of the 1890's or 1930's served up again as an adequate explanation of contemporary America or the capitalist world in general, and one could only sputter in response. The second time around, the views of Rosa Luxemburg or of Lenin not only seemed irrelevant, but had been cheapened and vulgarized. Nevertheless, the passions which leaned upon their theories for support were as fierce as ever. Capitalism, imperialism, and colonialism had all undergone immense changes, but hatred of the free world (and I insist on using that designation without quotation marks as well, for despite the combination of ignorance and intimidation which has forced its abandonment in recent years, it still points to the largest *single* distinction between the Communist and the non-Communist countries) was as fierce in 1970 as hatred of the unreformed capitalism of forty or eighty years ago.

I will not pretend to possess any full understanding of why this hatred should be so fierce or why those who feel it most keenly should now come predominantly from the upper-middle class. But whatever its sources, it served as an additional factor in the estrangement of people like myself from the radicalism of the late 60's. I for one, indeed, have by now come to feel that this radicalism is so beset with error and confusion that our main task, if we are ever to mount a successful assault on our problems, must be to argue with it and to strip it ultimately of the pretension that it understands the causes of our ills and how to set them right.

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Eliot, Lawrence & the Jews

Robert Alter

It is against a background of Christianity that all our thought has significance. An individual European may not believe that the Christian Faith is true, and yet what he says, and makes, and does, will all spring out of his heritage of Christian culture and depend upon that culture for its meaning.

—T. S. ELIOT
Notes towards the Definition of a Culture

WHENEVER TRACES of anti-Semitism appear in writers of major importance, I suspect that most readers are inclined either to dismiss the whole matter as an inconvenient but incidental prejudice of the author, or, alternately, to respond in mere indignation and, by so doing, to assume that hostility toward Jews is everywhere the same, without significant differences in nuance, motive, or general orientation. However, what a writer has to say about Jews, carefully considered, can sometimes provide a key to underlying aims and even methods in his work, and an insight into his relation to the larger culture around him. To suggest something of the range of the phenomenon, I would like to consider symptomatic works by two English moderns at opposite poles—T. S. Eliot, the Christian conservative militantly defending an ostensibly older idea of European culture, and D. H. Lawrence, the evangelical pagan attacking some of the basic values of Christian Europe.

Especially since Lawrence rarely touches on Jews in his fiction with English or European settings, it may seem peculiar that in *Kangaroo,* a novel set in Australia, he should make one of the chief protagonists a Jew and repeatedly draw our attention to the character's Jewish identity. But the choice, as we shall see, has its own logic, given the nature of Lawrence's concerns. This oddest of Lawrence's novels, more preachment and spiritual rumination than novel, records the encounter between a thinly-veiled autobiographical representation of Lawrence and Benjamin Cooley (the Kangaroo of the title), the Jewish charismatic leader of a bizarrely sectarian party with a vague, perhaps ominous, program for redeeming Australia. In the meandering course of the novel, amidst that mixture of claptrap and insight characteristic of Lawrence, reflections on Jews are made by the narrator, by the Lawrencean protagonist Richard Somers, by other characters from both the political Left and the Right, and almost none of it is what one would call complimentary. Nevertheless, it takes some sorting out to see precisely what the novel it trying to do with the Jews. As a clear example of how not to proceed, of how an average liberal reader responds to the first signs of literary anti-Semitism, let me quote a few lines on this novel from John Harrison's recent survey of political attitudes in Lawrence, Eliot, and others, *The Reactionaries*:

> He equated democracy with the rule of Jewish financiers, and he even "gradually came to believe that all Jews, and all Celts, even whilst they espoused the cause of England, subtly lived to bring about the humiliation of the great old England." It needed a Jew, he said, to produce the "last step in liberty," the Theory of Relativity, and like Lewis, Pound, and Eliot, he believed the whole liberal-democratic tradition to be essentially Jewish in nature. Kangaroo, the representative of this tradition, is himself a Jew. He did not mention men like Einstein by name alone; they were "the Jew, Einstein," or "Marx, the Jew."

All this is appallingly careless. It makes *Kangaroo* look like a ranting anti-Semitic tract, which is far from both the intent and the effect of the novel. The subject of these supposed opinions is Richard Somers, not D. H. Lawrence, and though Lawrence himself admittedly tends to blur distinctions between the two, one is hardly entitled to attribute the opinions of a fictional character to the author without the slightest modification. Thus, when Harrison, with no indication of transition, writes, "like Lewis, Pound, and Eliot, he believed the whole liberal-democratic tradition to be essentially Jewish in nature," the real antecedent of "he" has shifted from Somers to Lawrence. In point of fact, Lawrence did not believe this, and it even misrepresents the position of the protagonist of *Kangaroo.* Richard Somers associates democracy and patriotism with commercialism and industrialism, and these in turn he sometimes conceives in the image of the Jewish financier, but he does not *equate* democracy with the rule of Jewish financiers.

Lawrence, we recall, was often preoccupied with notions of racial characteristics and inbred cultural heritages, involving northern Europeans (by no means a positive type in his view), Mediterraneans,

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black Africans, Australians, Mexicans, Gypsies, Celts, and, of course, Jews. It is almost a matter of course that a Lawrence protagonist, considering the Jews, should connect them with the qualities of driving materialism and disembodied intellectuality that Lawrence himself felt were pervading modern civilization, though Somers also attributes other, rather surprising "racial" characteristics to the Jews, as we shall see in a moment. Finally, it is patently absurd to speak of Kangaroo as the representative of the "liberal-democratic tradition" when the novel clearly presents the movement he leads as a variety of fascism. "I want to keep *order,*" says Cooley with italic emphasis, "and that you can only do by exerting strong, just *power* from above." A moment later, he continues in the tones of a Grand Inquisitor: "Man needs to be relieved from this terrible responsibility of governing himself when he doesn't know what he wants, and has no aim toward which to govern himself. Man again needs a father—not a friend or a brother sufferer, a suffering Saviour." The fact that a reader of even middling intelligence could describe this political outlook as liberal-democratic can only be explained through the blindness of automatic liberal preconceptions: the twin-headed monster of anti-Semitism and reaction is imagined to be everywhere the same, and since Lawrence dislikes Jews, he must invariably associate them with liberal democracy, which he also dislikes. It would not occur to a writer like Harrison that Lawrence could at once hold Jews in contempt and be powerfully attracted to them, or that he could ultimately reject fascism, for all his cult of "the mystery of lordship," because the fascist idea profoundly violated the proud separateness that was sacrosanct to him, and he sensed that the true nature of fascism was—to borrow J. L. Talmon's telling phrase—"totalitarian democracy."*

This brings us back to the central puzzle of the novel itself: why on earth should Lawrence choose a Jew as the charismatic leader of a fascist movement? A moment after Somers's ironic description of the Theory of Relativity as the "last step in liberty" (which is said, by the way, in a spirit of friendly banter to Cooley, who he already suspects is a Jew), he reflects on Kangaroo's racial identity: "Surely . . . it is Jewish blood. The very best that is in the Jewish blood: a faculty for pure disinterestedness, and warm, physically warm love, that seems to make the corpuscles of the blood glow." To this Somers adds another unspoken comment, the aggressive paradoxicality of which should be duly noted: "The man had surely Jewish blood. And he was almost purely *kind,* essential kindliness, embodied in an ancient, unscrupulous shrewdness." Kangaroo exerts considerable magnetism over Somers, yet the Englishman is finally repulsed by the Australian and his political philosophy. Ostensibly, much of what Kangaroo preaches should appeal to a Lawrence hero: he speaks "in the name of living life," and has set his face against "anti-life," denouncing the obscene ant-heap of modern civilization. Yet Somers soon realizes that Cooley's doctrine, which he understands to be ultimately Jewish, is death to him.

IT IS easier to see what *Kangaroo* is all about if one simply recognizes that it is essentially a religious novel and not a political one. Though there are allusions to post-religious Jews who are sensed as a potentially subversive influence in the modern world, the real importance of the Jews in the novel is as the living source of the Judeo-Christian religious tradition. Thus, Somers says of the Celts—elsewhere, as we have seen, likened to the Jews—that "they remember older gods, older ideals, different gods: before the Jews invented a mental Jehovah, and a spiritual Christ." The Jews, then, are the ultimate adversary not because of an international Jewish conspiracy to subvert European values but, on the contrary, because the Jews are the source of European values which, in their highest fulfillment, alienate man from his natural world by leading the life of the psyche out of the body through the conduits of intellect and spirit. Although Somers repeatedly speaks of Jehovah and Christ, he is far from following the traditional Christian opposition between the Old Testament God of wrath and the New Testament God of love. Rather, in his own division of Old Testament intellect and New Testament spirituality, love permeates both Laws, love is the essentially Jewish way to redemption, and love asphyxiates, because it is eros ideologized, cut off from its roots in the physical world, reduced to a gospel whose bearer presumptuously violates the order of nature by insisting that he can embrace mankind in godlike compassion. It is this love that the Jewish message of redemption would pour over humanity like treacle, thus denying the individual his individuality, denying him both his connection with and aloneness in a primal world of nature deeper than love. "I know your love, Kangaroo," Somers says in a central renunciation of the new Jewish gospel. "Working everything from the spirit, from the head. You work the lower self as an instrument of the spirit. Now it is time for the spirit to leave us again; it is time for the Son of Man to depart, and leave us dark, in front of the unspoken God: who is just beyond the dark threshold of the self, my lower self." Lawrence's language shows an even more pronounced tendency in this novel than elsewhere in his fiction to adopt biblical cadences and biblical imagery; and this is perfectly appropriate because the book is a new gospel conceived as a radical revision of the old.

* Denis Donoghue, in his admirable review of *The Reactionaries* in these pages (August 1967), offers analogous examples of careless reading.

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The first great religious revelation, as Lawrence views it, came to the West through a people preoccupied with getting God in the head, with subjecting all of life to the rule of will, and love itself to a regimen of will. (This last notion, as a matter of fact, is not so far-fetched: it could be supported by a host of rabbinical statements as well as by biblical injunctions.) The piping insistence of the conscious will falsifies love, deceives man by making him believe he can assume the identity of a God fashioned in his own image, and finds its ultimate issue in a fascist doctrine preaching power from above in the name of a willed love of humanity. The Jew, in whatever sphere he moves, embodies both "essential kindliness" and "unscrupulous shrewdness" because his relationship to life is hyperconscious: with the disposition of will, one can train oneself to kindliness, though never to the deeper impulse of passion; with a will constantly on guard, one responds to enemies not in anger or hatred but with the fine cutting-edge of shrewd calculation. In Lawrence's own doctrine, on the other hand, man could be fully man only by renouncing the vision of his own coercive godliness, by slipping out of the constrictive grip of his human will and lapsing into a larger awareness of the magical animal world to which he belongs.

What *Kangaroo* does in effect is to raise the subconscious European archetype of the Jew as father to the level of conscious theological critique. Benjamin Cooley, as we have seen, casts himself as a benevolent All-Father to his future people, and he is ideally suited for this role precisely because he is a Jew. When it is said of Somers's wife toward the end of the novel that she "left Europe with her teeth set in hatred of Europe's ancient encumbrance of authority and of the withered, repulsive weight of the Hand of the Lord, that old Jew, upon it," one can see the serious point of cultural criticism in the remark, however much it may seem merely an unpleasant anti-Semitic slur out of context. For *Kangaroo* is a long, incensed argument against God the Father, and in the Western imagination God the Father stubbornly remains a Jew.

Lawrence's general outlook bears some resemblance, of course, to the neo-pagan current of German anti-Semitic ideology that attacked both Judaism and Christianity as corrupters of an indigenous Teutonic spirit, but the resemblance is mainly superficial. Lawrence lacks the essential ingredient of a nationalist mystique: all Europeans, Gentiles and Jews, are equally subjected to his scathing criticism, and he attacks what Europe—Christians and their Jewish spiritual forebears—has made of itself, without imagining a pristine breed of Northern heroes corrupted by a race of Oriental interlopers. He is not impervious, moreover, to the intrinsic appeal of the Jewish character and the Jewish spiritual way, as he understands them—Kangaroo, their embodiment in the novel, is a man of bizarre but very genuine personal charm, and the novelist, in the end unable wholly to exorcise him, must resort to killing him off before the conclusion of the book. Though Lawrence thinks we have had a good deal too much emphasis on reason in our culture, he is not, in the German proto-Nazi style, unreservedly anti-rational, and the real thrust of his criticism is directed not against reason but the hypertrophied will. It is precisely that critique of will that sets him inalterably apart from fascism, that makes his use of the Jews seem not altogether arbitrary, and that abides, after half a century, as a probing, still unanswered indictment of individual and collective life in Western culture. Careful consideration of the way Lawrence treats Jews and comments on them can help us see these aspects of his novel, and where its deeper intent lies; on the other hand, a stock response of censure or dismissal to the specter of anti-Semitism will only deflect a reader from what the writer is trying to say.

T. S. Eliot clearly brews a very different cup of literary tea from the ingredients of religious prejudice. It is tempting to shrug off all the anti-Semitism in Eliot's poetry as the purely reflexive prejudice of his cultural milieu and therefore of no particular importance in assessing his work. Explicit anti-Semitism in the poetry, after all, is limited to "Burbank with a Baedeker; Bleistein with a Cigar," to the notorious image in "Gerontion" of the squatting Jew "spawned in some estimanet of Antwerp," and to two or three passing innuendos in the Sweeney poems. Yet I would contend that the vehement energy of repulsion one encounters in Eliot when he does mention Jews bears reflection, and that the Jews do in fact constitute a crucial test-case for his conceptions of European culture and the nature of literary experience. "Burbank with a Baedeker," then, is not an aberration, as the one Eliot poem wholly devoted to an anti-Semitic subject, but rather it spells out underlying assumptions about poetry, tradition, and modern culture that are operative even when he is not at all concerned with Jews. As such, the poem deserves a careful reading.

For a relatively short poem, it has a rather long epigraph, which we might ponder because it offers at once an image of what Venice will mean in the body of the poem and a model—virtually a self-parody—of the poetic technique Eliot uses here and elsewhere.

Tra-la-la-la-la-la-laire—nil nisi divinum stabile est; caetera fumus—the gondola stopped, the old palace was there, how charming its grey and pink—goats and monkeys, with such hair too!—so the countess passed on until she came through the little park, where Niobe presented her with a cabinet, and so departed.

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The intended immediate effect of all this is obviously to impress the reader with a sense of unintelligible jumble, of a collage of snippets and bits and fragments of things, involving some sort of confusion between regal dignity and foul animality or perhaps eroticism; in this way, the whole passage recapitulates the latter fate of Venice, once a splendid center of European culture.

The epigraph is entirely composed of quotations, and a reader with a retentive memory may recall several of them. The clause with the gondola stopping by a grey and pink palace is from the first approach to the Bordereau palazzo in James's *The Aspern Papers*, a story of how great art gets mixed up with sordid commercialism by an interloper in Venice. "Goats and monkeys" is an expletive used by the enraged Othello, that hapless soldier of Venice. Straining a little, one might even recall that "with such hair, too" appears at the end of Browning's "A Toccata of Guluppi's," a poem that uses Venice as an image of the transience of human things: "Dear dead women, with such hair, too—what's become of all the gold/Used to hang and brush their bosoms? I feel chilly and grown old." Only the energy of a professional annotator, however, is likely to uncover the source of "Tra-la-la" in Gautier's poem, *Variations sur le carnivale de Venise* (allusion here surely on the brink of a dubious joke!), or the original setting of the whole last unit ("so the countess . . .") in the stage directions of a masque by Marston, or the Latin tag ("Nothing but the divine is permanent; the rest is smoke") inscribed around the base of a guttering candle in a Mantegna painting of the martyrdom of St. Sebastian. The epigraph, then, comes close to being a reduction to the absurd of the technique of the poem, which in eight brief stanzas alludes to three different plays by Shakespeare, to Homer, Horace, Ruskin, and one wonders what else.

Now, it is a commonplace to explain Eliot's mosaic method of composition —which he did not entirely abandon even as late as the *Four Quartets*—by referring to his need to reproduce formally the spiritual ruins of modern life, those devastated ruins against which the poet could only shore up fragments. I would like to suggest that this density of discontinuous allusion also has another function in Eliot's poetry, which is to invoke the whole range of the European cultural tradition in a way that suggests the tradition is at once universal and esoteric, impenetrable to the outsider. The Jew in this regard is important to Eliot as the archetypal outsider, a European who is not a Christian, which for Eliot is a virtual self-contradiction. Let us see how this imagination of exclusion works itself out in the body of the poem:

Burbank crossed a little bridge
Descending at a small hotel;
Princess Volupine arrived,
They were together, and he fell.

Defunctive music under sea
Passed seaward with the passing bell
Slowly: the God Hercules
Had left him, that had loved him well.

The horses, under the axletree
Beat up the dawn from Istria
With even feet. Her shuttered barge
Burned on the water all the day.

But this or such was Bleistein's way:
A saggy bending of the knees
And elbows, with the palms turned out,
Chicago Semite Viennese.

A lustreless protrusive eye
Stares from the protozoic slime
At a perspective of Canaletto.
The smoky candle end of time

Declines. On the Rialto once.
The rats are underneath the piles.
The jew is underneath the lot.
Money in furs. The boatman smiles,

Princess Volupine extends
A meagre, blue-nailed, phthisic hand
To climb the waterstair. Lights, lights,
She entertains Sir Ferdinand

Klein. Who clipped the lion's wings
And flea'd his rump and pared his claws?
Thought Burbank, meditating on
Time's ruins, and the seven laws.

Burbank, presumably an American tourist, at least manages to be mock-heroic, abandoned, like Shakespeare's Antony, by the god Hercules, after an assignation at a small hotel with Princess Volupine, whose name may suggest both pleasure and wolfishness. Aristocracy has gone all to pieces: the title of princess, in fact, might be no more than an ironic epithet for a whore, who hurries on from Burbank to entertain a rich Jew as spuriously noble as herself—for how could a genuine Sir Ferdinand be Klein? Bleistein is thrust into the poem against a context of allusions he would not understand, from which his alien background and nature irrevocably exclude him: *Antony and Cleopatra*, Greek mythology, a Homeric chariot of the sun, an echo of Horace's image of death beating "with equal foot" on the roofs of rich and poor, an evocation of Enobarbus's splendid description of Cleopatra sailing down the Nile, and then the sagging, grubby figure that is hopelessly incompatible with all this—"Chicago Semite Viennese." Bleistein is a merchant of Venice—"on the Rialto" is a phrase from the play—conceived with a nastiness unlike anything in Shakespeare. Having made his

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money in the characteristically Jewish fur trade, he continues, ratlike, to gnaw away the underpinnings of a once resplendent European city, of European society itself. If Shylock was accorded his moment of humanity when he could cry out, "Hath not a Jew eyes?," Eliot would seem to answer that the jew—lower-case "j" to suggest it is like the name of some odious animal—has only such eyes as bulge like dull bubbles out of protozoic slime, not civilized eyes that can really see a landscape by Canaletto, a religious painting by Mantegna, the architectural beauties of Venice, the ironic allusions of a poem by Eliot.

ELIOT'S TREATMENT of the Jews is, I believe, symptomatic of a general dysfunction of humanistic values operating in his work, for all its virtuosity and its power. It may help to see these larger implications in perspective if we recall that Venice had been used by poets as a symbol of transience and the decline of European grandeur for almost two centuries before the writing of "Burbank with a Baedeker." Eliot is, to my knowledge, the first important writer to introduce the Jews into the picture, indeed, to attribute the final decline of Venice to them—for the clear answer to Burbank's question of who clipped the mighty winged lion of Venice is Klein, Bleistein, and Company. A glance at some earlier images of a fallen Venice will suggest what this innovation means in terms of the poetic act and the poet's imagination of European culture. In the fourth book of the *Dunciad*, Pope sends his prototypical modern fop on a grand tour of the Continent, where, to climax a series of sites of cultural decadence, the young tourist visits "chief her shrine where naked Venus keeps,/And Cupids ride the Lion of the Deeps;/Where, eased of Fleets, the Adriatic main/Wafts the smooth Eunuch and enamoured swain." Pope, too, imagines a Venetian lion stultified, not by the machinations of rapacious foreigners but by the unrestrained sensuality of the Venetians themselves. Classical Italy for Pope, with a remembered Rome of the Augustan age at its hub, is the model of a fully achieved European culture, embodying values of discipline, order, responsibility, public service, magnanimity. In this modern Venice, all of the values of the Latin-speaking peoples have been subverted; and so the machinery of the pastoral tradition—mythological ornamentation and elegant poetic inversions, soft breezes wafting enamored swains—is cunningly used to expose an anti-pastoral reality of license and perversion.

For the English Romantics, Venice is both the locus of a once magnificent Renaissance art (as in Eliot) and the image of proud freedom crushed under modern tyranny (but Eliot was not interested in republican politics). Wordsworth, in his sonnet "On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic," invokes the city as "the eldest Child of Liberty." The sestet of this sonnet might be instructively set alongside the conclusion of "Burbank":

And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay;
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life has reached its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade
Of that which once was great, is passed away.

Against this sense of reverence for human greatness passed, Eliot's tone seems thin and self-indulgent, something between a whine and a sneer. "Men are we," says Wordsworth, and it is precisely this awareness of shared humanity in the face of the transience of men's achievements that gives his poem resonance. An implicit sense of "men are we" is what is most essentially lacking in Eliot's poem, which makes clear that European greatness is the property of an elite, and that humanity is not to be accorded so readily to everything that walks on two legs and can smoke a cigar.

Eliot's introduction of an outsider as the principal agent of decay radically shifts the balance of moral meaning in the idea of decline. In order to focus the nature of this shift more sharply, I would like to consider one stanza from Byron's great lament over fallen Venice at the beginning of Canto Four of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*:

Statues of glass—all shivered—the long file
Of her dead Doges are declined to dust;
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile
Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust;
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
Have yielded to the stranger: empty halls,
Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
Too oft remind her who and what enthrals,
Have flung a desolate cloud
o'er Venice' lovely walls.

In contrast to Eliot, who approaches the broken grandeur of the past obliquely and ironically through a jigsaw pattern of allusions, Byron imagines the subject directly in evocative elegiac imagery, the rhythm of decline echoing hauntingly in the falling music of the verse. Byron's file of dead Doges declined to dust makes Eliot's pseudo-aristocrats seem like a flimsy satiric invention, for of the two poets, it is Byron who persuades us that he really knows what aristocracy means. Against Byron's strong sense of present emptiness and his vividly symbolic evocation of greatness shattered, "Time's ruins" at the end of the Eliot poem looks like an abstraction, no more than a traditional poetic phrase appropriately placed by an expert dealer in phrases. But the difference between Byron and Eliot is most crucial in the different identities of the intrusive stranger in the two poems. Byron's reference is historical and political: Napoleon had delivered Venice to Austria in 1797, and so the capital of what had once been a Mediterranean empire was now subject to the very real domina-

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tion of a foreign imperial power. In the passage from Byron, poetry engages history; in Eliot, it instead conjures with distorted myths about history, for the Jew as the interloper who has subverted Venice, or Europe, is a fantasy of collective paranoia, while the driving commercialism of Venice is very much a home product, from the origins of the city in the Christian Middle Ages to modern times.

The apparition of the threatening stranger in Venice brings to mind an invocation of Venice as an image of decline in a work published just eight years before "Burbank"—Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*. Mann, too, is concerned with large questions of European culture and values, but his Venice represents a pole of overripe sensuality, joined with the lust for gain, which is not smuggled in from without but is intrinsic to European experience and to human nature, however it may be suppressed: "this was Venice, this the fair frailty that fawned and that betrayed, half fairy-tale, half snare; the city in whose stagnating air the art of painting once put forth so lusty a growth, and where musicians were moved to accords so weirdly lulling and lascivious." We might note that in Mann's story the demonic stranger, who at first seems to be alien and unknown to Aschenbach, the archetypal European, turns out to be a projected image of Aschenbach's own suppressed sensuality, a phantasmagoric inner view of Aschenbach himself. One could not come further from Eliot's vision of the stranger as an utterly alien, pestilential creature penetrating from without into the fastnesses of the European city to gnaw at its foundations.

WHAT I WOULD LIKE to stress in all of this is not that T. S. Eliot had abhorrent ideas about Jews but rather that the ideas he did have about Jews, seen in a perspective of literary history, reveal the defensive strain, the self-consciousness, and finally the externality of his relationship with European culture. There is, I suspect, an element of excessive awareness of tradition as an idea in all of Eliot's affirmations of its importance in his criticism, something that smacks of converting tradition into a literary ideology instead of naturally participating in it and using it, as poets like Pope, Wordsworth, and Byron were able to do. People who shrilly insist on the uniqueness of their own identity are likely to be insecure about it; groups that must forever affirm their own exclusiveness are almost certain to have inner doubts about their coherence or collective validity. It is no accident that the most extreme form of exclusivist nationalism in Europe developed in Germany, the country composed of a congeries of smaller states where a historical unity of national consciousness was most in question. Both *Deutschtum* as a political ideology and Eliot's Christian Europe as a cultural program needed, first, the myth of an ideal past—the Teutonic era and the Christian Middle Ages, respectively—as a prop, and, then, an external enemy, the Jews, to define through opposition their own unsure sense of identity and to explain the fallen state of their present culture. I do not mean to say that Eliot was actually close to Nazism; as a matter of fact, he came to oppose it firmly because of its pagan nature, and he certainly was prepared to make many discriminations and qualifications in viewing the Jew as the symbol of European decadence that would have been beyond the ken of fascism. Nevertheless, the structural analogy between the two is instructive.

The hyperconsciousness with which Eliot ideologizes a tradition and makes himself part of it is observable in the peculiar nature of his poetic achievement. He is a master, but finally a master ventriloquist, speaking in a score of different voices, ingeniously orchestrated, but never fully in a voice of his own. There is almost everywhere something excessively cerebral about the way he uses the poetic tradition, as though he had studied it minutely without ever completely assimilating it. *The Waste Land* is a poem of stunning virtuosity, but one has only to compare its use of the myth of death and rebirth with Milton's handling of the same mythic materials in *Lycidas* to see the difference between a poet who has absorbed the tradition, can freely imagine through it, and one who consciously contrives poetry out of the tradition. Eliot's poetry, to be sure, has its marvelously moving moments, even when it is most synthetic, and I don't want to suggest that he should be written off as "minor." The sense of connection, however, with a real, living humanity is shrunken in him, and because of it he strains and stretches to make himself one with a Western literary tradition that, before all else, expresses just that sense of connection. One suspects that in Eliot an impaired sense of community with the living and the dead is compensated for by the enunciation of Christian community as a program, and by a poetic technique that substitutes an intricate network of insider's allusions for the natural assumption of shared culture and shared humanity. Eliot is often viewed as the paradigmatic poetic spokesman of his troubled period, but it may be equally appropriate to see him as a symptom of the trouble. In any event, his case illustrates how attention to the role of anti-Semitism in a writer's work may lead to a clearer apprehension of his imaginative world. If the Jews have a historical destiny, it is to be at the crossroads of trouble, and that destiny has been fulfilled time after time not only in the realm of geopolitics but also in the Christian imagination.

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Southern Paternalism

THE WORLD THE SLAVEHOLDERS MADE. TWO ESSAYS IN INTERPRETATION. By EUGENE D. GENOVESE. *Pantheon Books. 274 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by ALLEN WEINSTEIN

LIKE EUGENE GENOVESE'S previous studies of the ante-bellum South, the two essays which comprise this book attempt to examine slave societies through the prism of social class rather than by focusing primarily, as most previous scholars have done, on patterns of race relations. Thus, in the first of the two essays, Genovese views the different New World slaveholding societies as a series of colonial cultures which he tries to locate "within the process of world-wide capitalist development itself." To achieve this "world perspective," he constructs a skillfully-triangulated comparative analysis: of the social and economic patterns among European powers involved in New World slavery; of the distinctive forms that slavery assumed in French, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, and English colonies; and of the social and economic tensions which eventually divided the emerging slave societies from their mother countries. The result is a sophisticated triumph of comparative historical analysis, although one that often jettisons the Marxist framework which Genovese professes to be both using and revising.

What emerges from Genovese's analysis is a complex spectrum of slave societies, ranging from some that were thoroughly "capitalist" in orientation to more paternalistic ones like the American South, which Genovese views as *the* leading modern "counterrevolutionary" slaveholding culture. Genovese's Southern slaveholders are rarely singleminded agrarian capitalists, ruthlessly engaged in frank pursuit of the plantation dollar. Rather, he finds the slaveholders evolving during the ante-bellum period into a decidedly anti-capitalist, class-conscious elite with a paternalistic life style. (Genovese prefers the term "seigneurial" to the designation "feudal" employed by certain of his critics.) Within this emerging "seigneurial" culture, he argues, the defense of slavery as a "positive" good—a defense undertaken by Southern intellectuals beginning in the 1830's—represented not "mere apologetics or rationalization . . . [but] the formulation of a world view that authentically reflected the position, aspirations, and ethos of the slaveholders as a class."

Most pro-slavery theorists of the times, Genovese acknowledges, avoided a total assault on the basic democratic, individualistic, and entrepreneurial foundations of American society. They chose to defend bondage as *one* positive good, proper for the South, rather than as *the* positive good, proper for the entire nation. This was not true of George Fitzhugh—the subject of the second of the two essays making up this book—whose unrestrained jeremiads against market capitalism, free society, and the "wage slavery" of Northern labor made him somewhat suspect even among fellow slaveholders. Genovese insists, however, that Fitzhugh's ideas, far from being merely idiosyncratic, were the ideological terminus of Southern "seigneurialism" and the "logical outcome" of a system of thought appropriate to the enclosed plantation world.

In Genovese's entire approach to the ante-bellum South, there resides a certain romanticist quality. The signs are unmistakable: his claim that the South fought no Civil War but rather a "War for Southern Independence"; his ferocious contempt for "phony" Cavaliers such as the absentee West Indian planters who affected (according to Genovese) a spurious paternalistic ideology; his curiously defensive rationale for studying the slaveholders ("No matter how guilty they may have been . . . they did nonetheless stand for a world different from our own that is worthy of our sympathetic attention"); and, finally, his treatment of George Fitzhugh as an ideological Don Quixote, tilting his lance against capitalism's worldwide windmill. All these touches distinguish the author's own "world view" from a more traditional liberal or radical approach to the Old South.

Indeed, some of Genovese's goofier critics have mistakenly seen his work as an apologia for "the world the slaveholders made." The charge is nonsense, and yet his essays do betray, both in language and mood, an ungrudging respect for the achievements of an adversary culture: not the high-strung reveries of a Margaret Mitchell, to be sure, nor even the mellower romanticism of an Ulrich B. Phillips, whose historical influence Genovese has tried to revive. Instead, Genovese's work reflects an admiration for the Old South tempered by an unbridgeable ideological divergence; Genovese at Tara would be something like Khrushchev at Roswell Garth's Iowa farm. Look what can still be achieved, reflects the visitor, by people so fundamentally wrong!

WHAT WAS achieved in Fitzhugh's writings, Genovese finds, was the expression of an ideological "world view" not only consistent and rigorous in itself, but so "ruthless and critical" that it proposed nothing less than the reversal of most of the dominant tendencies of 19th-century Western history. Fitzhugh's more extreme proposals for the South, indeed, contradicted many basic assumptions of pro-slavery thought. Thus, for example, in a cotton culture that traditionally favored free trade, Fitzhugh opposed free trade as a species of "market capitalism." Moreover, in a region of large plantations and small farms, he opposed agrarianism and favored the

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construction of small cities and industry. He ignored the states-rights argument, ridiculed Jeffersonian ideology, and urged strong government as a means of checking anti-slavery agitation.

In short, Fitzhugh favored the conscious molding of the slave South into a model regional autarchy, a goal to be achieved through withdrawal from the world market economy into a tightly governed, self-sufficient plantation society. The "logical outcome of the slaveholders' philosophy"? Perhaps, although Genovese is least convincing when making a case for this proposition. He does provide a masterly exposition of Fitzhugh's theories, guiding us through the entire fabric of that ideologue's complex argument, from his harsh critique of unresolved economic and social problems in capitalist society to his equally strenuous defense of slavery as an abstract social system.

On occasion Genovese succumbs in the course of his exposition to that tendency exemplified by the preacher who scribbled alongside a sentence of his sermon text: "Weak point. Shout!" The author "shouts" at his scholarly opponents during a discussion of W. J. Cash's *The Mind of the South,* ridiculing the idea, popularized not only by Cash but by historians Kenneth Stampp and Charles Sellers, that the pro-slavery defense did not reflect the master class's increasing self-confidence but rather its queasy and uncertain reaction to Northern attacks on Negro slavery. Genovese dubs this argument "the currently fashionable disease, guiltomania," and he flays roundly at its major advocates. His discomfort is understandable, because if large numbers of slaveholders did spread themselves out on a self-constructed moral rack, then Genovese is wrong in postulating an increasingly self-confident master class.

Similarly, as more than one critic has already noted, Genovese nowhere mentions a curious private letter in which Fitzhugh, devoted advocate of autarchy, conceded to his correspondent: "I assure you, Sir, I see great evils in Slavery, but in a controversial work I ought not to admit them." Neither does Genovese admit the existence of any substantial group of slaveholders who felt guilty over owning bondsmen. His evidence for the absence of "guiltomania," however, consists only of a few slaveholders who testified to considering their world "natural" and "permanent."

GENOVESE SETS OUT to demonstrate two major propositions in his essay on Fitzhugh. The first, on which he is persuasive, was that Fitzhugh alone, of the entire band of pro-slavery theorists, recognized "that slavery could not continue without the utter destruction of capitalism as a world economic system." In other words, Fitzhugh displayed more clarity than most of the euphoric Southern firebrands when he recognized the mordant anomaly of trying to maintain "slavery in one country" against a global anti-slavery tide.

Genovese, however, fails to deliver on his second claim: that of defending his protagonist against the charge of ideological "inconsistency" pressed by previous historians. On more than one critical issue, Genovese himself portrays Fitzhugh equivocating, temporizing, back-tracking, and, when all else failed, retreating into "paradox." Thus, on the important question of maintaining a market economy for the plantation South while at the same time withdrawing from the world market itself, Genovese finds remarkable "consistency" in Fitzhugh's solution, which, we are told,

> seems brilliantly to meet all reasonable objections: a limited industrialization based on a small-scale urbanization, tied firmly to a broadly based plantation regime on the countryside by the localization of economic life.

Several pages later, however, the author concedes that this scheme was the "wildest of dreams," which, of course, it was—a scheme intended, no less, as a means of maintaining the inner purity of "seigneurial" slavery by transforming the entire South into a "limted," "small-scale," urban industrial society.

The truth is that the hallmark of "consistency" fails to describe adequately either Genovese's provocative scholarship or the desperate schemes of George Fitzhugh. At times, in fact, one suspects that Genovese's passion to defend Fitzhugh's "consistency" as a theorist is more excessive than even his subject's, as when the author tortuously justifies Fitzhugh's proposal for an alliance of Northern capitalists and Southern planters against the challenges of abolitionism and socialism. Genovese denies that, in making this proposal, Fitzhugh can be justly charged with having cynically repudiated "his whole moral attack on bourgeois society and its ethics." The reason? "His proposal was in fact a strategic retreat aimed at isolating and disarming the Northern bourgeoisie." Historians will recall similar "strategic holding operations" (Genovese's phrase) in which extreme ideological opponents made common cause against real or imagined enemies. But in advocating an alliance, Fitzhugh's "inconsistency" seems clear, despite Genovese's zealous apologia.

In the end, Genovese has stepped deliberately but unnecessarily into an ideological *cul de sac* by claiming for Fitzhugh *too* central a place within ante-bellum Southern thought. Perhaps Fitzhugh's actual significance lay in a willingness to project a slaveholders' paradise so outlandish that it discomfited even most of the master class. Certainly his controlling vision—the entire *world* re-enslaved!—found few enthusiasts even among pro-slavery apologists. Far from serving as basic guidelines for a master class and for a "society evolving along these lines," many of Fitzhugh's strictures and proposals actually undermined the defense of "slavery as it was." Therefore, his importance as a theorist may stem partly from the tensions he helped expose among his own kind. The two literary figures whom Genovese evokes to suggest the distinctive character of Fitzhugh's ideas—Don Quixote and Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor—reinforce this "paradox": that by articulating what Stanley Elkins has called the "outer moral limits of the pro-slavery argument," Fitzhugh may have un-

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wittingly suggested the dilemma posed by that argument not merely for his Northern critics but for many of his Southern admirers as well.

The World the Slaveholders Made carries Genovese's argument for Southern paternalism—an argument first spelled out in *The Political Economy of Slavery*—to its own "logical outcome" in George Fitzhugh's writings. In the process, the author polishes his basic conception of American slavery into an even more systematic, if not more persuasive, treatment than can be found in his earlier work. The present book really breaks new ground, however, in its comparative analysis of New World slave systems; its first essay, a superb piece of scholarship, provides the structure for a major reassessment of the Western Hemisphere's slaveholding classes. As he pursues his research in comparative history, Genovese may find his Marxist categories too constricting for the intricate burden of evidence he will have to handle, especially in the case of Brazilian and Cuban slavery. Should that happen, the result may be a historical synthesis of New World slave systems distinct from the author's earlier treatments and, to use Genovese's favorite word, "paradoxically" his own.

The Fifth Candidate

MANAGING MAILER. By JOE FLAHERTY. *Coward-McCann. 222 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by CHARLES W. BROOKS

IN THE SPRING of 1969, the prevalent anti-Lindsay mood in New York appeared strong enough to sweep any Democrat into office in November. This made the Democratic nomination more than usually attractive; with a Republican Mayor, two Republican Senators, and a Republican Governor, the Democratic organization's disarray made the nomination also, from the point of view of the individuals seeking it, seem more

CHARLES W. BROOKS *teaches film analysis at Harvard. His article, "Z: Politics on Film," appeared in our May issue.*

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than usually attainable. The ambition, instransigence, and private resources of a number of those hoping to be Mayor combined to bring about a disastrous primary race. On a sloppy and treacherous track the three major contenders tried so hard to keep close to the liberal rail that they succeeded in allowing the fourth entrant, the sentimental favorite of the outer boroughs, City Comptroller Mario A. Procaccino, running on the outside with law and order, to come in first in an overcrowded field.

Managing Mailer recounts the race of the fifth candidate. It is accurately described on its cover as "a saga of Mailer and Breslin's siege of City Hall by Norman Mailer's campaign manager, Joe Flaherty," except that "saga" suggests a lyric quality totally lacking in the book itself. The author inadvertently offers the best assessment of his work. Remembering the campaign, he says: "If we are to be judged and disdained for the stupidity, the pettiness, the meanness, the laughing, and the drinking recounted in this book, the reader should keep two thoughts in his head: first I believe I have told more than other chroniclers of campaigns; second, if the above traits are abhorrent, then most of mankind is in that lamentable state." These two thoughts describe and delimit the book. The first suggests its disarming candor, which is *Managing Mailer*'s great strength and chief virtue. The second offers a glimpse of Flaherty's pseudo-philosophy, which intermittently intrudes into the narrative.

Managing Mailer finds Flaherty's accomplished *Village Voice* journalistic style in the dubious company of an incipent and immature style of a different order. Not content, for example, to make an endless number of lame and tasteless *bons mots* (actually *mauvais mots*) about Breslin's drinking habits, Flaherty tries to endow them with a Dickensian, not to say Shakespearean, significance. Thus, there is present throughout the book the lurking intimation that Breslin's drinking is somehow a statement for our times. But the result of Flaherty's literary ambitiousness is an exploitation of the vulnerabilities that his practiced journalism has uncovered; in this particular instance, Breslin is turned into a shabby and pathetic figure.

Indeed, it is fair to say that Flaherty's imagery cheapens everything it touches. There is a persistent nagging infelicity in *Managing Mailer;* Flaherty's attempt to leaven a competent but flat news narrative with the yeast of metaphor causes the whole book to sag catastrophically. To choose just one example: Mailer, in a bid for the serious center, forced his assistant Jack Banning to shave off his beard. Flaherty speculates in *Managing Mailer* on the outraged reaction of Banning's wife. "Who is to know," he asks, "in the more profound scheme of the sheets what delights that tuft rendered the lady?" And a few lines further on: "The lady's curses were divinely delivered. Who can comprehend the shock she felt that evening when her cheek sought out that familiar, warm ball of yarn, only to find a foreign, cold darning egg?" Not being one to temper candor with taste, he next reports that the staff made Banning "an object of derision." "I told him his chin looked like a show girl's shaven cunt, and the others were just as unkind." Fortunately, the reader is spared details of their several unkindnesses.

If *Managing Mailer* fails, though, it is not because it is candid to excess, but because all this candor is ultimately to no avail. There is no forest; *Managing Mailer* is all trees. The candidate appears in bits and pieces, in remarks and speeches, in quips and commands, in jokes and anecdotes. But the whole is significantly less than the sum of its parts, and the man himself remains elusive. Flaherty never even tells us why Mailer ran in the first place. This seems to me a failure not of the pen but of the spirit. The reason Mailer is so elusive in *Managing Mailer* is that he also eluded Mailer's manager.

MOST OF THE candidates for Mayor of the City of New York in 1969 ran on more than a platform. They ran because each cherished some private vision of the city, and each addressed his campaign to the city he thought New York was. For Norman Mailer, it was the Brooklyn in which he had grown up. When he waxed rhapsodic about the urbanites he saw in Chicago in 1968, he was really describing the "good people" who had inhabited the Brooklyn of his youth, people who

> were simple, strong, warm-spirited, sly, rough, compassionate, jousting, tricky and extraordinarily good-natured because they had sex in their pockets, muscles on their back, hot eats around the corner, neighborhoods which dripped the sauce of local legend, and real city architecture, brownstones with different windows on each floor, vistas for miles of redbrick and two-family wood-frame houses with balconies and porches, runty stunted trees rich as farmland in their promise of tenderness the first city evenings of spring, streets where kids played stick-ball and roller-hockey, lots of smoke and iron twilight.

Ironically, of all Mailer's opponents, Mario Procaccino would have most readily recognized this city as his own. For Mailer's vision of New York was closer to that of Mario Procaccino than to any other candidate's. Both of them realized, from the knowledge that can only come with experience, that the true greatness of New York did not radiate out from the bright lights and glamor of Manhattan, but resided in the sprawling, unglamorous residential areas of the Bronx and Brooklyn, which Mailer called "an asphalt herbarium for talent destined to cross the river" into Manhattan, and make it into the world capital it was.

Therefore, Mailer and Procaccino shared a common enemy: many of those who had been born in Manhattan, and all of those who thought they should have been. The people Mailer continually referred to as the "fuckin' phony liberals in Manhattan" were the very same Procaccino had castigated, in one of the campaign's more memorable phrases, as "limousine liberals." Because Procaccino himself had never really been able to cross the river, and because he regretted his failure so keenly and so publicly, Manhattan refused to take him seriously. But Manhattan was even less willing to take Mailer seriously, precisely because his own crossing had been so brilliant.

In the end both failed. Procaccino failed because he could not articulate the despair of many who

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saw a widening division between those who were supporting the city and those whom the city was supporting. But Mailer could, and his failure was that nobody understood him or believed him when they did.

This is especially true of his campaign manager. Flaherty continually belittles Mailer's often professed desire to get out and confront the "real people," a phrase which always appears within condescending quotation marks in Flaherty's book. But it was for these "real people" alone that Mailer was running. The only logic of Mailer's main platform plank—making New York City the 51st state—was that it would offer the "real people" a chance to seize control of their political destiny by drawing up a constitution for the new state, and in so doing experience a rebirth of spirit in freedom. Mailer hoped to revitalize a sclerotic city by allowing, not leading, a revolt of his "real people," "the good people of Brooklyn" and the other outer boroughs, against the "fuckin' phony liberals" who piously and imperiously presumed to run their lives from the empyrean heights of Manhattan. This is what Mailer meant by a "hip coalition of the Left and the Right"—it would be an alliance of all those who suffered because a little group of willful liberals was killing New York with clichés. And this is why Mailer proposed self-determination for every neighborhood, so that each resident of New York City might liberate himself from the debilitating tyranny of City Hall and find, in Mailer's words, his "own true life style." If this were not done, Mailer knew the City of New York would not survive; if it were, it could survive and perhaps flourish.

Mailer's manager appears never really to have understood any of this. If one is to judge from the book, in the depths of his soul Flaherty cared only for his candidate, and was not at all sympathetic to his candidate's *raison d'être*. "Mailer's *fault*," he writes at one point, was that "he had fallen head over heels in love with the voters of New York. The thick ankles, the bad breath, and the acne were non-existent. Mailer had let down the hair and taken the glasses off plain Jane, and Shazam! A beautiful broad."

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Flaherty, in other words, sought in Mailer a literate, and more literary, John Lindsay. Early in the book Flaherty confesses that he "had a warm feeling for John Lindsay whom I thought was a courageous mayor trapped in a historical revolution"; "his encouragement" of that black revolution, says Flaherty, "is what moved me toward him." And in the epilogue, the first question he takes up is "did Mailer save the city from liberalism" by taking enough votes from Badillo to give the primary to Procaccino, and hence the election to Lindsay. Flaherty seemed to conceive of Mailer's idea of all-power-to-the neighborhoods, which, he says, is "what had first attracted me to this campaign," as merely another encouragement for the black revolution. So, in the book, Mailer's frequent rantings against compromising his campaign with "fuckin' leftist causes" is patronizingly presented as a result of some inexplicable and perverse infantile infatuation with the mythic "real people." "Once again," Flaherty writes with his typical wit on one such occasion, "he said he wanted to confront the 'real people,' whose location, like Mrs. Calibash's, was in some undiscovered domain of the mind. . . ."

Unfortunately for New York, Flaherty does have a point. He might not have apprehended the beauty of Mailer's idea, but he did know what was wrong with it. "During the course of the campaign," Flaherty writes,

> I was to find out that he had a one-way love affair with street types. If someone had been part of an experience foreign to his own, Mailer found in him occult powers bestowed only on the children of the gutters. Their dreariness of thought . . . made no difference to him. This enchantment had to do with Mailer's high sense of intrigue and his romantic notion of the streets. That the gutter was a spawning ground which produced dullness far more often than genius was never considered.

"It was," Flaherty inelegantly concludes, "a characteristic I found unattractive, similar to that of society broads who chase saxophone players and bouncers."

But a "romantic notion of the streets" was the animating idea and sustaining force of Mailer's entire effort. "Think of us as antiques," Mailer said when he announced his candidacy, "because we are sentimental about the past. We want New York to thrive again. We want New York to be a city famous around the world for the charm, ferocity, elegance . . . and racy characters of our separate neighborhoods."

The question, of course, is whether the neighborhoods could ever measure up to Mailer's hopes. Mailer had grown up in a Brooklyn which was all the things he claimed for it. The challenge of city life had been great, but it had been met magnificently, because the promise had been greater still. But Mailer had been away many years, years which had seen the challenge overwhelm the response, and the task outweigh almost any reward. The "good people" Mailer had once known in Brooklyn had either moved to the suburbs or wished they could. The neighborhoods Mailer remembered so lovingly were now peopled by fearful whites, mainly elderly, and often disoriented and angry blacks, mainly young: two desperately disparate life styles forced together in uneasy and unnatural proximity. Other second generations had left Brownsville and Williamsburg for the relative affluence of Crown Heights and Flatbush. But now, as the blacks began their second generation in Brooklyn, they found a spreading slum cutting off their escape. "Brooklyn, beautiful Brooklyn," the citadel of second-generation urban elegance, was becoming a prison for its inhabitants.

The challenge of city life had, in vast areas of New York, become a condemnation, because the promise of city life had disappeared. Norman Mailer's electoral defeat spared him a crueler disappointment. For Mailer had to fail. He knew that the city had been destroyed from the top down, and he wanted to revitalize it from the bottom up. But Mailer had been in Manhattan a long time, and the vitality he had left behind in Brooklyn was all gone, squeezed from the neighborhoods he loved by the crushing burden that life had become in the greatest city in the world.

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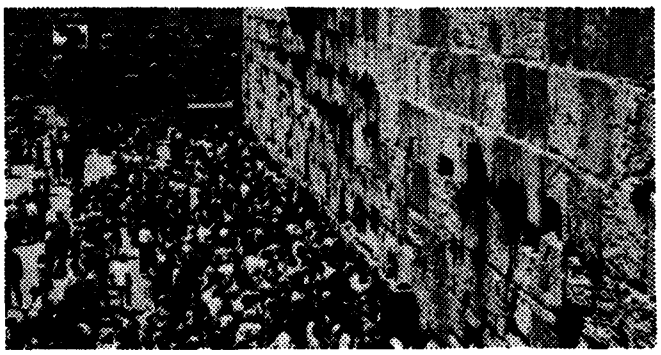

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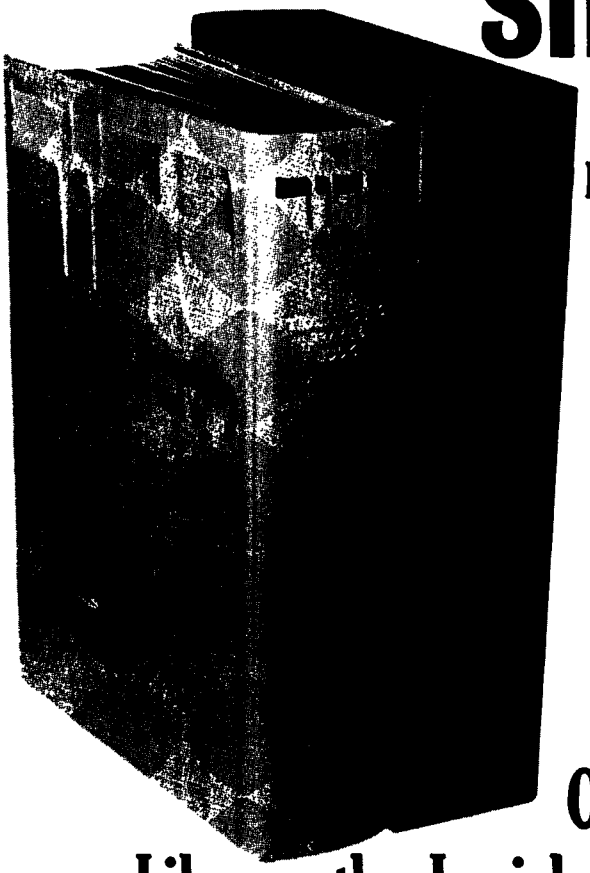

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Weimar

GERMANS AND JEWS: THE RIGHT, THE LEFT, AND THE SEARCH FOR A "THIRD FORCE" IN PRE-NAZI GERMANY. By GEORGE MOSSE. *Howard Fertig, Inc. 265 pp. $8.95.*

Reviewed by LEWIS D. WURGAFT

AMERICAN intellectuals, in their current agony, have constructed a virtual *Doppelgänger* out of the turbulent life and premature death of the Weimar Republic. In its most recent incarnation, the "Weimar analogy" offers left-wing American intellectuals a historical portrait of their counterparts in pre-war Germany —an articulate circle of journalists and creative writers who stubbornly clung to their role as critics of a beleaguered democratic government. Older commentators have denounced this group, charging them with political ineptitude or indifference, and implying that progressive intellectuals must rally to a democratic government in crisis. Younger writers, with greater misgivings about the American consensus, have defended the actions of the independent Left, arguing that its adherents were correct in refusing to rally to the Weimar government which, behind its constitutional façade, condoned repressive policies.

Germans and Jews, a new collection of essays by George Mosse, adds a cultural dimension to the issue of the independent Left which should revise the debate profoundly. Mosse defines the goal of the Left intellectuals as the search for a "Third Force"—the "attempt to solve the problems of the modern age by creating a force that could eliminate the unpalatably capitalist and materialist present." The "Third Force" concept, a motif which unites the essays in this volume, has been used before to describe the ideology of the *völkisch* Right; what sets Mosse's book apart is his application of the concept to those intellectuals on the Left who were thought to be most *opposed* to that ideology. As portrayed by Istvan Deak in his

LEWIS D. WURGAFT, *a new contributor, teaches humanities at M.I.T.*

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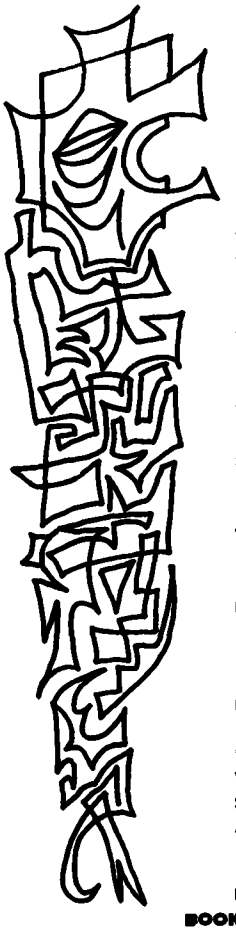
study, *Weimar Germany's Left-Wing Intellectuals,** the writers who clustered around progressive journals like the *Weltbühne* and the *Tagebuch* were steeped in democratic, liberal, and humane values. In terms of their political concerns and journalistic efforts, the left-wing intellectuals emerge from Deak's treatment as embattled Jacobins—as men who shared the political values of our own progressive intellectuals and who, like them, were forced into opposition (according to this view) by the growing conservatism around them. Even so shrewd an observer as Carl Schorske has followed Deak's argument to the conclusion that the *Weltbühne* circle, while deeply concerned with individual liberty, had no sympathy with the yearning for community.

In Mosse's estimation, and in my own, this opinion is wide of the mark. Looking beyond the political antagonism between leftist and *völkisch* intellectuals, one comes upon a rich vein of assumptions and temperamental affinities which the two groups shared. Mosse ascribes the alienation of the left-wing intellectuals not to political circumstances, but rather to the "hunger for wholeness" which plagued the Right as well. The Left was also obsessed with the absence of "meaning" in the modern world, though it used other cultural resources to define its own conception of *Geist*, or creative spirit. The Left objected to materialism, not on *völkisch* or religious grounds, but rather on moral and aesthetic ones. Thus leftist intellectuals rejected the mechanistic materialism of both the Social Democrats and the Communists, and tried to forge a humanistic socialism which vacillated schizophrenically between a concern with the integrity of the individual and the desire to create a spiritual community. Like the Right, the Left regarded the *Geist* of German idealism as a "Third Force" which could reconcile ideological, economic, and social differences. Furthermore, it shared with the Right the conviction that an intellectual elite had to mediate between that *Geist* and the culturally backward elements of society. Mosse points to the activist movement, under Kurt Hiller, as the polemical center of this messianic conception.

Germans and Jews serves to remind us, then, that the political position which other commentators have argued was forced upon the left-wing intellectuals of Weimar Germany was equally a product of their own cultural orientation. While they feverishly expressed a desire to be socially involved, their notion of political life was informed by an absolutism and idealism that undermined their efforts at commitment. That they distrusted the compromises involved in party politics was perhaps understandable, but their emphasis on spiritual concerns over practical economic issues effectively isolated them from any popular following or mass movement. And that isolation was compounded by their insistent identification of spiritual integrity with political independence.

Unfortunately, the acuity of Mosse's approach is all but under-

* Reviewed in these pages by Martin Jay, December 1969.



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mined by his faulty scholarship. His treatment of the independent Left is marred by major errors of emphasis and omission (with regard to the history of the independent Left, Istvan Deak is a much more reliable guide than Mosse), chief among which is the tendency to take the attitudes of the activist movement for those of the intellectual Left as a whole. In fact, the activists were only the most idealistic and elitist faction within the intellectual Left, the most representative of the "Third Force." Their real influence was limited to the exultant period of chiliastic expectation which followed upon the November 1918 revolution, and expired soon thereafter. The overall tone of the *Weltbühne* and of the independent Left was much more restrained and pragmatic, and while it is no doubt true that the search for a "Third Force" helped to determine its perspective, the independent Left was actually a much more diverse group than Mosse suggests.

Mosse also ignores some major points which dramatize the connection between intellectuals of the Left and of the Right. His most serious omission involves the impact of the *bündische* movement. The *Bünde* were corporate groups whose members were supposedly drawn together by spiritual empathy rather than by economic interest. As Mosse notes in his essay, "The Corporate State and the Conservative Revolution in Germany," they were initially fostered by the Radical Right and the German youth movement. Yet the spiritual principle of *bündische* solidarity also inspired the activist scheme for the organization of intellectuals. Men like Gustav Landauer viewed the *Bünde* as building blocks in a total reordering of German political life, as the vehicle through which *Geist* could override the artificial social and economic differences which divided the nation.

Finally, Mosse fails to mention some of the more idiosyncratic characteristics of those leftists concerned with the "Third Force," perhaps for fear that, in so doing, he would tarnish their reputation as intellectuals. Leonard Nelson and his *Internationale Sozialistische Kampfbund* propagandized for vegetarianism, and Hiller and the activist movement defended homosexual practices. These men wished to be regarded as radicals and revolutionaries, but they were more often dismissed by conservative Germans as eccentrics. Their intellectual independence was frequently parallelled by a self-imposed or externally-enforced social estrangement.

WITH A FEW major exceptions, the German intelleotual Left was solidly Jewish. The familiar conjunction between Jewishness and radicalism has usually been explained as a reflection of the Jew's estrangement in an alien culture. Mosse acknowledges this argument, but also emphasizes the attraction that the idea of the Third Force held for Jewish intellectuals, and relates their attitude to the conditions of German culture. In his essay, "The Influence of the *Völkisch* Idea on German Jewry," Mosse notes the ominous opposition between the values of the "Third Force" and the German stereotype of the Jew as rootless, calculating, and materialistic. Among the Jewish youth who embraced the *Wandervogel* on the one side or the Zionist movement on the other, according to Mosse, were many who accepted this stereotyped image of Jewish life. Their wish to regain contact with nature and community was a classic example of the revolt of the sons against the fathers. On the other hand, the leftist intellectuals, who were largely urban and assimilationist, responded to the problem of Jewish identity with an insistent individualism. Their own desire to relinquish a stereotype, Mosse would argue, led them, through another route, to the seductive vocabulary of German culture.

Mosse also points out, with some alarm, the striking coherence between the *völkisch* Right and the mystical and communitarian ideas of Jewish thinkers like Martin Buber, in whose writings he discerns a tendency to push beyond the bonds of the religious community toward a mystical union with all mankind. Although he regards this

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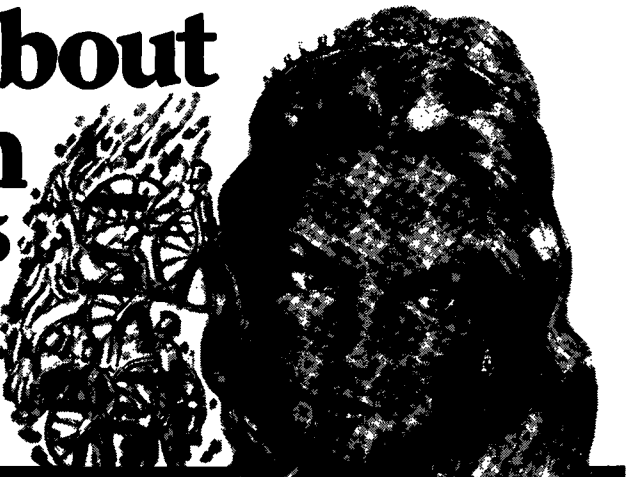

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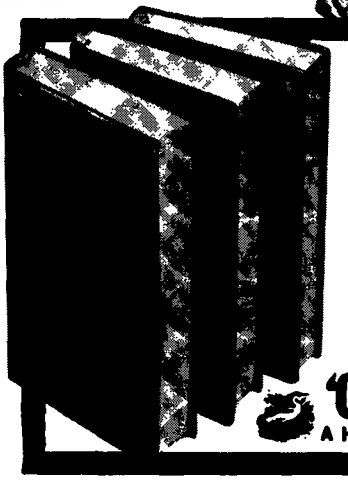

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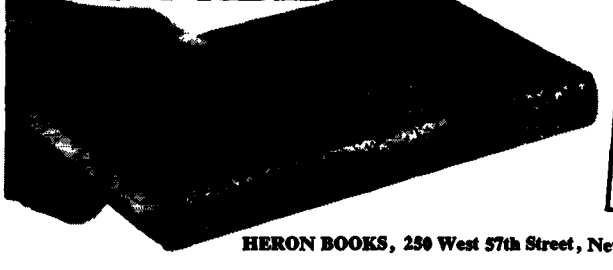

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as a laudably humanistic alternative to liberalism Mosse sees little in it that is distinctively Jewish. But here, I think, Mosse neglects an element in Buber's approach that tied him both to the Jewish community and to the intellectual Left.

In *The Holy Way,* published in 1919, Buber suggested that the Jewish people could act as spiritual emissaries of Eastern thought to the Western world. While Western theology provided a sharp dichotomy between inner spirit and external action, Eastern religion expounded the essential unity of spiritual and social institutions. Religious experience, according to Buber, crystallized in social action. The Jewish people were destined to demonstrate the role of social commitment and communal organization in the fulfillment of religious awareness. The activist movement rejected the specifically Jewish elements of Buber's thought, but easily adapted the remainder to its own view of the messianic role of the intellectual in society at large.

IT CANNOT be said of the Left intellectuals that they were, either as Jews or as radicals, "strangers in a strange land." Their efforts to create a "Third Force" were nurtured by social circumstances and intellectual traditions that were peculiar to Germany. Nor were they simply a prototype of the American Left today. To a much greater degree than is the case with contemporary American radicals, their humane principles were at war with absolutist and elitist instincts which precluded compromise. Indeed, the most arresting parallel between the German intellectual Left and our own involves the concept of the "Third Force" itself, as it has become manifest in the nether regions of the American Left where political radicalism shades off into communal and cultural experimentation. The German intellectuals, it is true, feared the process of democratization, while the New Left calls for more democracy, in more "relevant" forms. Yet both have called for the emergence of communal life to combat the dehumanizing progress of modernization, and both have regarded spiritual awareness and individual creativity as antidotes to the faceless quality of urban life and corporate capitalism.

As has often been stated, however, contemporary America is by no means the Germany of the 1920's. Admittedly, a familiarity with the plight of the German Left enables us to view our own radicals of both Left and Right with greater understanding, and greater apprehension as well. Yet the democratic and liberal traditions which protect American radicals had only shallow roots in Germany. The tragedy of the independent Left was that its own humane version of the "Third Force" could not compete with that of the *völkisch* and fascist Right for the support of the German people.

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THE STRAWBERRY STATEMENT. By JAMES SIMON KUNEN. *Random House. 150 pp. $4.95.*

PUSH COMES TO SHOVE. By STEVEN KELMAN *Houghton-Mifflin. 287 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by SAMUEL MCCRACKEN

AMONG DISTINCTIONS between the Now Generation and its antediluvian predecessors is that today's young field marshals (and corporals) write their memoirs before retiring. Which may be a good thing. Should so linear—not to say Gutenbergian—a concept as autobiography prove a casualty of the revolution, our culture will have already laid down a reasonably large cellar of barricade reminiscence.

One of the earliest and best-known of such documents is of course James Simon Kunen's *The Strawberry Statement,* a book I missed on its original publication but to which I was drawn recently after seeing the movie based on it. Kunen seems more at home with

SAMUEL MCCRACKEN *teaches literature and the humanities at Reed College in Oregon. Mr. McCracken's article, "Quackery in the Classroom," appeared in our June issue.*

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feeling than with theory, and is a better recorder than analyst even of that. Nevertheless, *The Strawberry Statement* is a frequently informative and often charming book. Kunen has lately said that he was writing for the silent majority, but while the book certainly contains a message for the Vice President's kind of folks—"We are at the worst as moral as you people, and why don't you stop worrying about the length of our hair and start worrying about the issues we raise?"—the medium in which it is cast speaks to aging liberals rather than to the Great and Silent. The former are likely to be charmed, the latter doubtless confused and seriously put off, by such passages as this:

> . . . I, for one, strongly support trees (and, in the larger sense, forests), flowers, mountains, and hills, also valleys, the ocean, wiliness (when used for good), good, little children, people, tremendous record-setting snowstorms hurricanes, swimming underwater, nice policemen, unicorns, extra-inning ball games up to twelve innings, pneumatic jackhammers (when they're not too close), the dunes in North Truro on Cape Cod, liberalized abortion laws, and Raggedy Ann dolls, among other things.
>
> I do not like Texas, people who go to the Zoo to be arty, the Defense Department, the name "Defense Department," the fly buzzing around me as I write this, protective tariffs, little snowstorms that turn to slush, the short days of winter, extra-inning ball games over twelve innings, calling people consumers, pneumatic jackhammers immediately next to the window, and G. I. Joe dolls. Also racism, poverty, and war. The latter three I'm trying to do something about.

If Kunen's natural audience is one of unmilitant liberals, the message he brings to them is that radicals are human, that it is possible, while occupying the university president's office, to worry about keeping his desk clean, to dislike chanting, to slip out and practice with the crew—that a chap may decent be, and yet disrupt. Such data are likely enough to be interpreted to the advantage of the radical position: if decent and sensitive people can believe and

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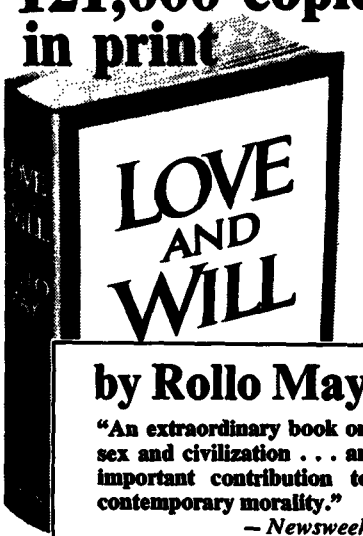

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act thus, perhaps there may be a good deal to their position after all. This notion, however, is best judged in the light of its cousin: if these people believe and act thus, they cannot be decent. Or, to use an increasingly familiar idiom, if these people believe and act thus, they are pigs, and if we do not kill them it is because revolutionary prudence keeps us from doing so at the present. The apparent need to agree with people before according them respect or humanity is an old human frailty, as is the tendency to evaluate ideas in terms of their holders. What ought to be done, and usually is not, is to judge the wine apart from the skins. Thus, Mr. Kunen's entirely admirable personality is absolutely irrelevant to evaluating the line taken by SDS at Columbia in April 1968. The sooner each of us can admit that there are some real swine on his own side, some decent chaps on the other, the sooner we can all get down to the urgent task of evaluating ideas.

Mr. Kunen's slack-jawed sophomoric cynicism can cloy—"Before going to bed, I read a little more of Galbraith's *New Industrial State,* which is not bad, for a book"—and long stretches of his prose are disfigured by smug self-righteousness (there is nothing New Leftists admire in themselves more than their original discovery of the Ten Commandments). Yet the note on which the book ends is surprising: "One of these days I may fight in earnest and altogether so I won't have to fight anymore." Here, one touch of rhetoric makes all the world kin. My friends who reluctantly back the war so we won't have to fight the Chinese on Staten Island would understand how Kunen feels. So would the late Woodrow Wilson, and perhaps even have agreed in principle. For what Kunen proposes to do is to fight to make the world safe for democracy. President Wilson had the good luck not to survive *our* discovery of the folly of such fighting, and one can only pray that Mr. Kunen and his fellows make their discovery through some less cataclysmic failure.

AND NOW, in a manner of speaking, *The Strawberry Statement* is a film. Assuming that someone paid Mr. Kunen or his assignee for film rights, one must admire the shrewdness of vendor and integrity of vendee, who got for his money little more than a title, and the right to invade Mr. Kunen's privacy by making a film about a young man named Simon James who rows around the margin of a university insurrection (possibly also Mr. Kunen's services in a cameo role, although that may have been another contract). Add a plot (Columbia 1968, presumably free for the asking), and you've got the basis for a screenplay.

The film has been touted in *Playboy* as the most cogent statement about youth since *Easy Rider.* This is a very Hefnerian sort of comparison; actually *The Strawberry Statement* is a statement about youth only slightly less cogent than *The Wizard of Oz.* It is in fact no more than a middling example of how Hollywood operates to exploit any fad, the sort of thing Kunen was thinking about in his book: "If you find something that you like, they take it and buy it and sell it and never know its worth, and make it worth nothing." Nothing in the film

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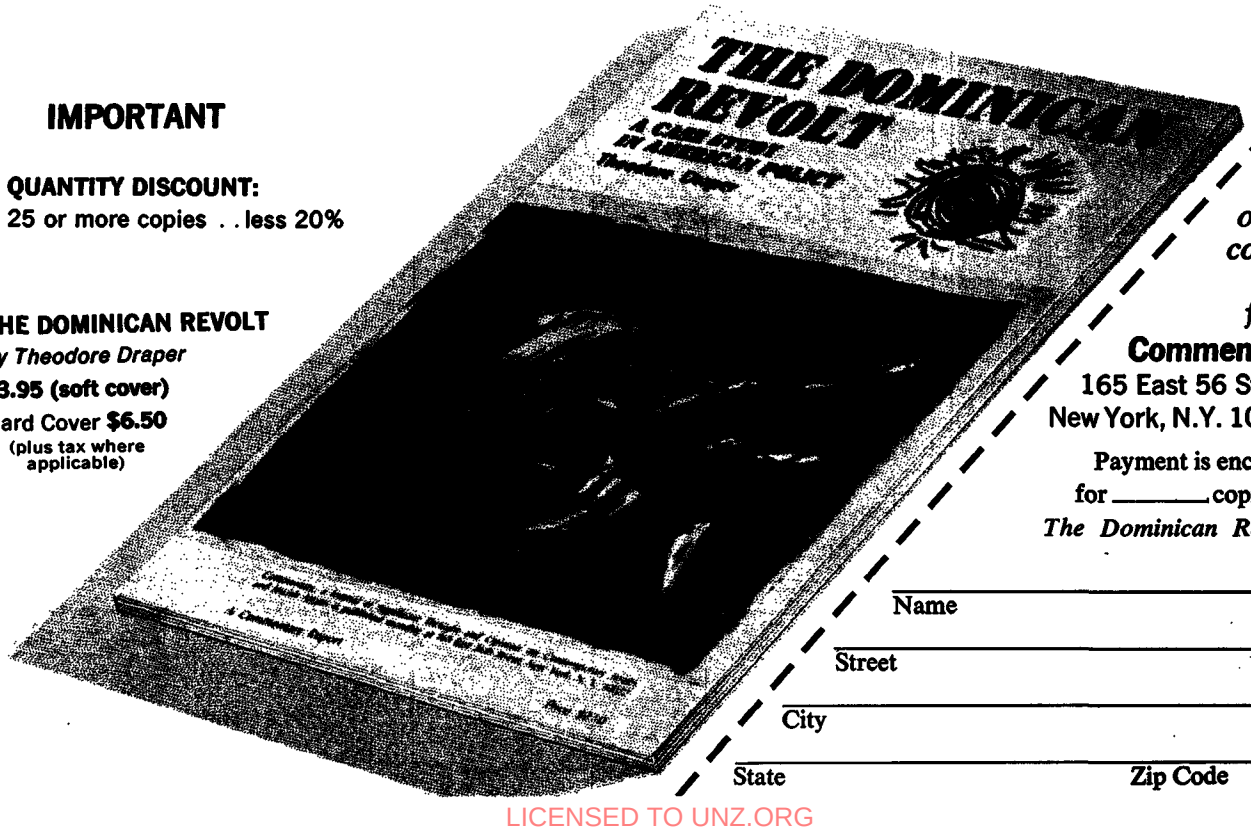

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comes within sight of the power and honesty of Kunen's own *graffito*: "I am sorry about defacing walls, but babies are being burned and men are dying, and this University is at fault quite directly."

The film's sensibilities are crudely sensationalized, its capacity for understanding feeble. In a heavy-handed attempt to look impartial, the makers of the film—that is, those responsible, or liable for it, as the authors of the book and the screenplay have both tried to place some of the blame on MGM—try to make both parties to the confrontation seem worse (in some cases, a fair trick) than in reality. They apparently regarded Columbia's plan to build a gymnasium in Morningside Park as an inadequate objective correlative, and so the film's "Columbia" plans to tear down a ghetto school, destroy its environing park, and on the site thus cleared, construct—hang on to your seats—an ROTC building. It is of course quite impossible to imagine a university combining the nastiness *and* the stupidity requisite to form such a design; still more perplexing is the necessity of believing that the ghetto school to be torn down is likely to be better than its replacement.

Like a guilt-stricken diabetic veering toward insulin shock after an excess of sugar, the film shows the Tactical Patrol Force being called onto campus only *after* the kids begin beating up on the cops, and the bust that ensues is far more gentle than such things ever are in reality. The imbalance is then restored by an apocalyptic and interminable final bust, doubtless designed to send one away from the cinema trembling with outrage, but which damn near put me to sleep. In all, a film to convince the silent majority that it knows a little more about its troublesome offspring, but not enough to tell them much.

TO TURN FROM *The Strawberry Statement* to *Push Comes to Shove* is to turn from revolutionist to social democrat. Kelman's book, dealing primarily with events at Harvard, is peppered with verbal slips indicative of haste and is rather callow in style, but it contains a great deal of careful and perceptive analysis. Seymour Martin Lipset's judgment that it is "the best discussion of conflict in the university . . . from undergraduate ranks" should not lead the wary to expect no more than a cow on skates: with a slightly maturer prose style, the book would be a credit to any number of authors well over thirty.

Social democrats are if anything more outraged than liberals by the New Left, having the additional irritation of beholding a radicalism not simply wrong, but corrupt. Kelman's tone is in keeping with such a situation: he surveys socialists whom he rightly sees (to use Bobby Seale's neat phrase) as at best national, with a keen eye and a quietly acid tongue:

> The hereditary radicals—the intellectual Left extremists at Harvard—suffered a sad fate at Harvard. For they at least were good people.
>
> The same cannot be said for

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the other major social stratum which provides recruits for SDS and the backbone of the new cadres recruited into the organization between the time I arrived at Harvard and April 1969. These are Wasp rebels. The sight of an aristocrat who has lost the will to live is aesthetically degrading. These declining members of the American aristocracy are not at all similar to the standard aristocratic stereotypes. They are neither self-confident men at the top, uncaring of those below, nor the humane, social-service oriented democratic aristocrat.

Kelman's general strictures against SDS would sound harsh in the pages of the *National Review*, for he seeks reasons for SDS vice beyond mere liberalism or original sin. Specifically, Kelman believes that SDS (with help) came near to destroying Harvard; believes that SDS types seriously fantasize the assassination of people like himself; and joins with many of his elders in seeing the New Left as clearly proto-fascist:

> The nightmare is that it can be the most idealistic who introduce the most terrible systems of degradation and unfreedom we can imagine. We need not wait for the SDS tortures and SDS jails to learn that lesson of history.

Kelman sees SDS as attacking the university simply because it is an institution, and looking for issues with a cynicism worthy of Establishment politicians: Mark Rudd is quoted as admitting that the issue of defense research was trivial at Columbia, and that he never knew where the notorious gym was being built.

Throughout the work there recurs a low estimate—sometimes implicit, sometimes explicitly argued—of New Left intelligence. In a milieu where the liberal tries to hang on to the thought that it is possible for men of intelligence and honor to disagree among themselves, the implications and charges are troubling: but I fear my own experience substantiates Kelman's view. I recall a moment during a Black Studies crisis two years ago when I was ponderously informed by a white radical (said to be one of the best minds at Reed) that while her demands might seem senseless put up against the unyielding wall of Aristotelian logic, they were in fact valid in terms of "social logic," in which, I took it, the earth might well be an orange, Socrates a not-man. Last year, a group of Reed students, having decided to boycott spring-term classes, met publicly to formulate the demands for which they were going to boycott. When it became apparent that six or seven mutually exclusive grading policies commanded support, it was solemnly resolved to demand them all.

Push Comes to Shove, abounding in similar examples, is in many ways a profoundly depressing work, ending as it does by asking whether sanity has a future, and not being sure of the answer. What is inspiriting about it is its presentation of evidence that not all youthful intelligence has been dulled by rage, not all youthful idealism corrupted by assumptions of moral superiority.

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